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ABSTRACT

Evaluation of the Mobile Classroom Project, which provided complementary and supplementary educational experiences not available through the Primary Correspondence Schools (PCS) for 58 isolated country children in Central Queensland during 1978 and 1979, used personal observations: comments from parents, home supervisors, and key educators associated with the project: and study of project documentation. The Mobile Classroom Unit was a self-contained classroom in a large truck, staffed by two teachers who visited four (1978) to six (1979) sites for two consecutive weeks, two or three times per year. Participating students (years one through seven) had opportunities, through speaking, listening, singing, dancing, questioning, answering and speculating, to develop skills in social interaction, communication, investigation, and individuality not provided by the PCS, which utilized written papers, comments, and oral response through casette tapes. Although no statistical information was analyzed, parents', teachers' and home supervisors' comments stressed the children's improved awareness, motivation, socialization, and verbalization. Parents reported their own increased growth and self-development because of their children's involvement in the program. Also included are discussions of the Central Queensland Priority Country Area (including maps), the mobile classroom concept, support services, special provisions for education of isolated children: and diagrams of the Mobile Classroom Unit. (AW)

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PRIORITY COUNTRY AREA PROGRAM

PRIORITY COUNTRY AREA PROGRAM EVALUATION SERIES: REPORT NO. 4

The Mobile Classroom in Central Queensland

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July 1979

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ABSTRACT

Report and Evaluation of the Mobile Classroom Project – Central Queensland

The Mobile Classroom Project represents an attempt by the Queensland Priority Country Area Program to counter educational disadvantage in eight shires in Central Queensland, resulting from the particular geographical isolation of the children and the limited experiences able to be provided by the Primary Correspondence School with which the children are enrolled.

The Report is a descriptive study in some depth. It considers the setting in which the Mobile Classroom operates; the support provided for the program, and the personnel operating it; the school programs themselves; and the services offered by the school, and their outcomes. Issues, concerns and recommendations as seen by the writer are presented at the end of each chapter.

The methodology employed in the study was simple but time-consuming and involved personal observation of the Mobile Classroom in operation over a number of days at two different sites, visits and meetings of parents and home supervisors at all but one of the remaining sites, discussions and interviews and a study of the records kept in Brisbane and Rockhampton. All the data were analysed and considered, then logically re-ordered, and became the basis of this Report and evaluation.

The Central Queensland Country Priority Area consists of eight shires, 150 132 square kilometres in area, with a population of 31 900. The population is generally widely dispersed, with an average distribution of 0.2 persons per square kilometre, which is about one-sixth of the average population distribution for Queensland. Thirteen urban service centres account for almost 60 per cent of the population in the eight shires. The outstanding features of the area are the range, variety and extent of natural resources in the region which, in some cases, are only now being developed. There are 38 schools in the area, four of which are non-state, that is, Catholic schools. The area has 176 children who are enrolled with the Primary Correspondence School, Brisbane.

The Mobile Classroom Unit, essentially a large truck with an inbuilt classroom, residential caravan and staff of two, works on a five-week cycle (two weeks at each of two sites and one week at base). Each of the six sites is visited two or three times a year. The school caters for 58 of a total of 176 primary correspondence pupils in the area. The Unit is well equipped. While it is on site, children either travel daily to and from school or suitable boarding arrangements are made for them.

Very good support is provided for the Mobile Classroom, at the local level by the local schools, both state and Catholic, by parents, local authorities, businesses and tradesmen, and the contact persons; at the systems level by the education authorities, the Program Co-ordinator and the Capricornia Institute of Advanced Education; and programs and persons providing educational assistance for isolated children.

In its programs, the Mobile Classroom has emphasised and focused on those areas of curriculum that cannot be satisfactorily covered by the Primary Correspondence School. Written papers, comments and oral response through cassette tapes which are a feature of correspondence education, do not supply all the assistance needed by its pupils. Emphases are placed on the social interaction of pupils and on the provision of appropriate opportunities for relevant educational experiences so that pupils are encouraged to communicate, to investigate and to express their individuality. The Classroom climate is warm, supportive and stimulating, and the children are responsive and enthusiastic. Variety in the resources and flexibility in the teacher are the key characteristics of the resources of the Unit.

Reactions of parents and children to Mobile Classroom programs and services are highly positive. Parents report that the children are interested, motivated and enthusiastic, more aware and confident, and anxious to go to school. Parents often note and comment on improvements in their children's verbal skills and communication, in social interaction, and in the development of gross motor skills. They see the advisory and consultative services provided by the teacher-in-charge as highly supportive, encouraging and extremely valuable both to themselves and to the home supervisor. The comments of the teacher-in-charge indicate that there are favourable changes in children's attitudes and behaviour, and in the development of a range of skills, both verbal and non-verbal. There is, however, no statistical evidence to support these observed improvements.

In program planning and in the functioning of the Mobile Classroom, the most significant and central factor is close teacher-pupil relationships. It is evident that, in this unique educational provision, the educational opportunities available to the children (and in a very special way, to the parents and the home supervisors) will depend primarily on the personal suitability, knowledge of and empathy for, life and people in isolated areas, as well as on the quality and professional competence, of the teachers appointed to the Mobile Classroom. The kind of community represented by this School seems to be more important perhaps, than lesson content.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Report of the Mobile Classroom Project in Central Queensland is one of a series of reports and appraisals of the various programs operating in areas recommended by the Minister for Education in Queensland, and declared by the Federal Minister for Education, as priority country areas in the State. The programs have been made possible by funds provided by the Australian Schools Commission for that purpose.

1.2 The Central Queensland area is the second area declared a priority country area in terms of the process described by the Schools Commission in its 1976 Report[1]. The area declared consists of nine shires, Bauhinia, Belyando, Broad Sound, Duaringa, Emerald, Jericho, Nebo, Peak Downs and Tambo. As Tambo Shire is more closely linked in terms of access and services to south-west Queensland, it has been incorporated for administrative purposes into that area. In this Report, the Central Queensland Priority Country Area is described as consisting of the following eight shires: Bauhinia, Belyando, Broad Sound, Duaringa, Emerald, Jericho, Nebo and Peak Downs. It adjoints the north-eastern section of the first declared Priority Country Area (see Figure 1).

1.3 The whole area encompassed by the eight shires is characterised by geographic isolation, separating families and schools from social and cultural contacts and from resources and opportunities that would be available to comparable urban families. This isolation results in an impoverished experiential background for children living in the area.

1.4 The Report is a descriptive study in some depth of the unique character and significance of the Mobile Classroom and its programs, which have been designed to provide both complementary and supplementary educational experiences to those provided by the Primary Correspondence School for children in this isolated part of Queensland.

1.5 In the Report, the terms *Mobile Classroom* and the *School* are used interchangeably.

---

1. Schools Commission Report: *Rolling Triennium 1977–1979*, Schools Commission, Canberra 1976, pp. 65–67.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

2.1 The study of the Mobile Classroom has been an interesting and comparatively simple, although somewhat time-consuming, exercise made up of a number of distinct elements. The methodology can be described simply as follows:

- Personal observation of the Mobile Classroom and its functioning was undertaken at two of the six different sites included in its circuit.
- Visits were made to three of the four other sites used as a Mobile Classroom centre (rain preventing a visit to one site). At each site, there was a meeting of parents and home supervisors of children enrolled to discuss the project. Formal meetings were held at four centres, and an informal meeting at another. At the centre not visited because of rain, contact was made by telephone or letter with the parents concerned, and their views and comments were obtained.
- Discussions took place with the Regional Director of Education, Central Region, who is also Chairman of the Priority Country Area Program (P.C.A.P.) Committee for Central Queensland, and with the Rockhampton Diocesan Director of Catholic Education, who is Deputy Chairman of the P.C.A.P. Committee, Central Queensland.
- Informal interviews were held with selected individuals – either parents, contact persons, or members of P.C.A.P. Committee.
- Discussions took place with the P.C.A.P. Co-ordinator in Central Queensland, who accompanied the writer on visits to four sites, attended the meetings and was very helpful because of her knowledge of the area and its people.
- Discussions were also held with the Supervisor and the Deputy Supervisor of the Primary Correspondence School (PCS), and a meeting took place with PCS teachers of children attending the Mobile Classroom.
- A study of P.C.A.P. files in Rockhampton and Brisbane was undertaken.

2.2 As a result, an extensive body of information was obtained from the data sources listed in the preceding paragraphs. In analysing this information and in preparing the Report, the different sources have not been separately reported, but the data have been re-ordered and incorporated into the appropriate section of this Report.

CHAPTER 3

THE CENTRAL QUEENSLAND PRIORITY COUNTRY AREA – A BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Location and Extent

3.1 The Central Queensland Priority Country Area is located, as the title indicates, in Central Queensland. It encompasses eight shires – Bauhinia, Belyando, Broad Sound, Duaringa, Emerald, Jericho, Nebo and Peak Downs (Figure 1). The area, almost bisected by the Tropic of Capricorn, is an extensive one – about 500 kilometres from south to north, and about 300 kilometres west to east. It stretches from approximtely 25° south latitude to 20° south latitude. Charters Towers, Bowen and Mackay service it in the extreme north, Roma in the south and Rockhampton in the east. The total area of the eight shires is 150 132 square kilometres, with an estimated population at 30 September 1978 of 31 900[1] (Table 1). Population density for the area is about 0.2 people per square kilometre compared with 1.2 people per square kilometre for the whole of Queensland.

Towns and Communications

3.2 The 1976 population census and the 1978 population estimate reveal that Emerald, until recently the largest and most important town in the area, has been surpassed in terms of population by the developing coal mining centres at Blackwater and Moranbah. Urban centres and bounded localities with 200 or more persons in the area are detailed in Table 1. These 13 centres account for about 60 per cent of the total population of the eight shires.

---

1. Australian Bureau of Statistics, Queensland, *Local Authority Areas Statistical Summary*, AGPS, Canberra, 1978.

Table 1: Urban Centres and Bounded Localities in Central Queensland with 200 or more Persons (1976 Census)

Shire	Centre	Population	
		Centre	Shire
Bauhinia	Arcadia	335	2 470
	Springsure	763	
Belyando	Clermont	1 644	7 610
	Moranbah	4 053	
Broad Sound	Dysart	1 585	3 660
Duaringa	Blackwater	4 638	8 500
	Bluff	338	
	Duaringa	379	
Emerald	Emerald	3 161	6 280
	Rubyvale	577	
	Sapphire	447	
Jericho	Alpha	563	1 270
Nebo	Nebo	–	800
Peak Downs	Capella	364	1 310
	Total	18 847	31 900
	Per cent	60	100

The location of service centres within each shire is shown in Figure 2.

3.3 The area is served by rail from Rockhampton to Longreach. The line almost bisects the area, and passes through Emerald and Alpha, with branch lines from Emerald – north to Clermont and Blair Athol, and south to Springsure. Bush Pilots Airways provide regular services from Rockhampton and Brisbane to Clermont, Emerald and to the smaller service centres. A passenger bus service runs daily from Rockhampton through Blackwater, Emerald, Clermont and Moranbah to Mackay. A daily trip in the opposite direction is also time tabled.

3.4 A network of main and subsidiary roads also serves the area. The main highway through the region from Rockhampton in the east still has unsealed sections which are poorly engineered, and in wet weather some delays are caused by flash flooding. Vehicles regularly become bogged – a feature of the travel on all roads in the area. From Emerald, the geographical centre, the inland developmental road passes through Clermont to Charters Towers in the north. From Clermont, a main road extends east to Mackay. Roads to the south from Emerald link it and other centres through Springsure, Rolleston and the Arcadia Valley to Roma.

FIGURE 1

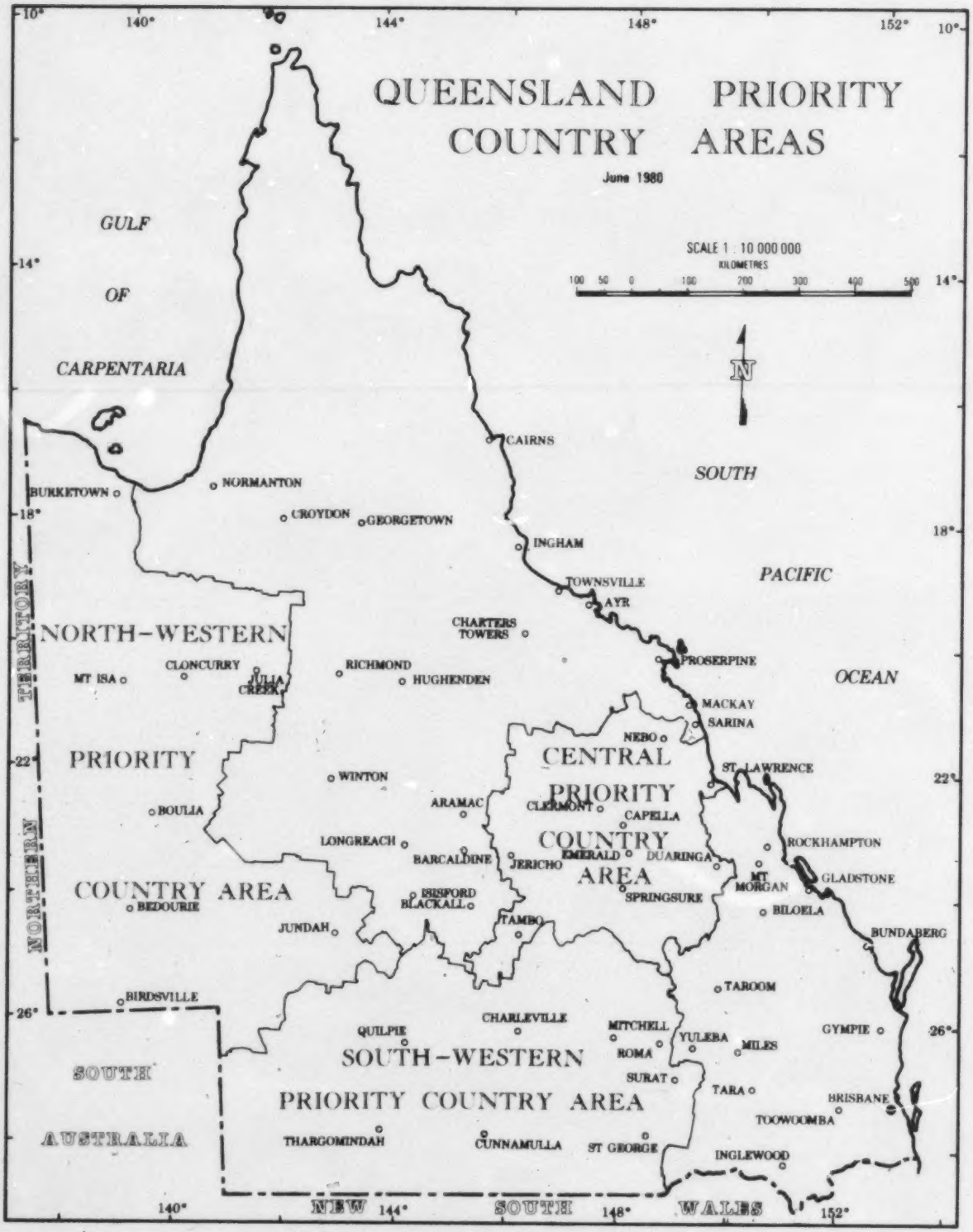
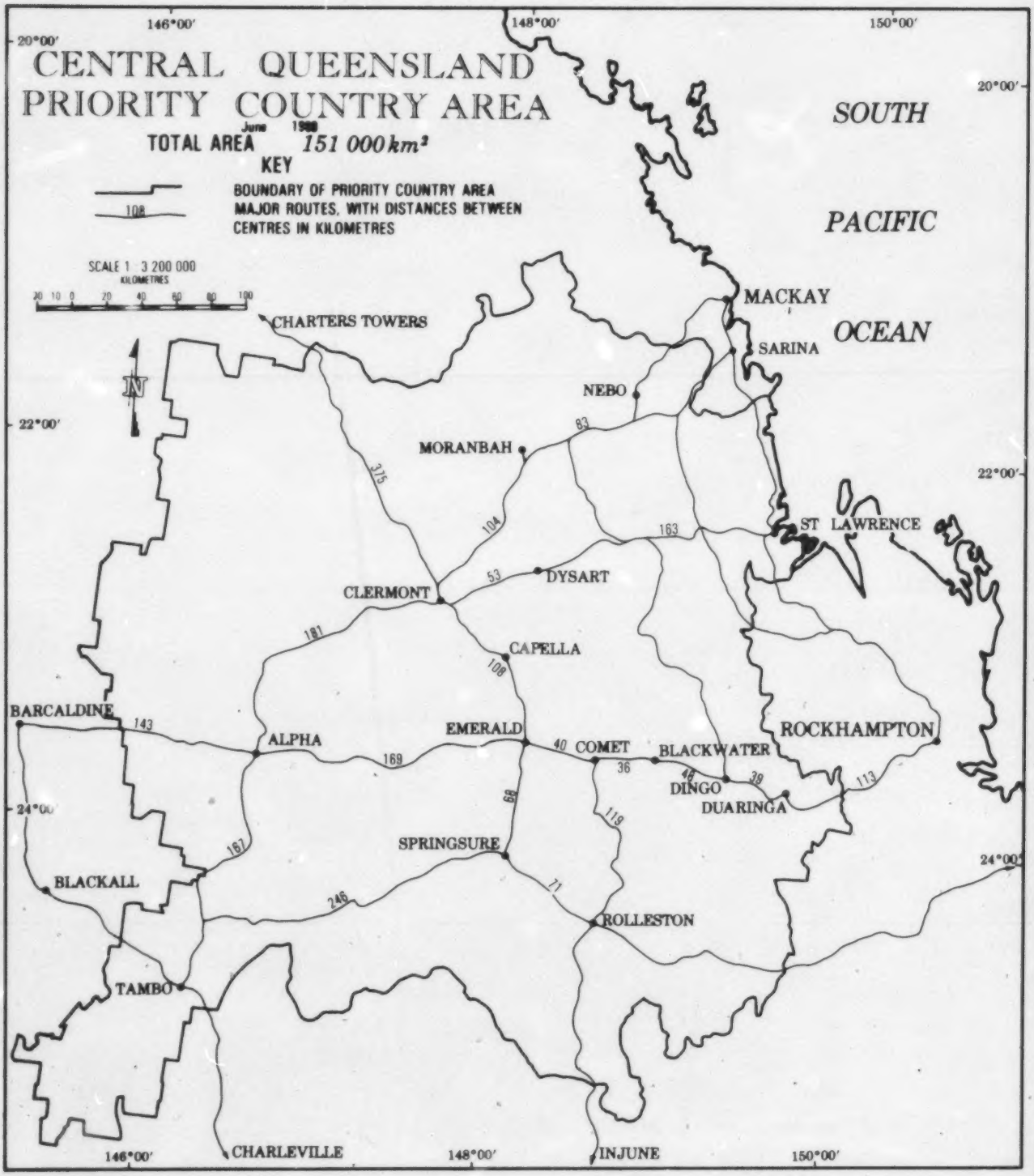

QUEENSLAND PRIORITY COUNTRY AREAS
June 1980
SCALE 1 : 10 000 000
KILOMETRES
100 50 0 100 200 300 400 500
N
GULF OF CARPENTARIA
SOUTH PACIFIC OCEAN
NORTH-WESTERN PRIORITY COUNTRY AREA
CENTRAL PRIORITY COUNTRY AREA
SOUTH-WESTERN PRIORITY COUNTRY AREA
NORTHERN TERRITORY
SOUTH AUSTRALIA
NEW SOUTH WALES
CAIRNS
NORMANTON
BURKETOWN
CROYDON
GEORGETOWN
INGHAM
TOWNSVILLE
AYR
CHARTERS TOWERS
PROSERPINE
MACKAY
SARINA
NEBO
ST LAWRENCE
ROCKHAMPTON
GLADSTONE
MT MORGAN
BILOELA
BUNDABERG
GYMPIE
TAROOM
MILES
TARA
BRISBANE
TOOWOOMBA
INGLEWOOD
ST GEORGE
CUNNAMULLA
THARGOMINDAH
BIRDSVILLE
MT ISA
CLONCURRY
JULIA CREEK
RICHMOND
HUGHENDEN
WINTON
BOULIA
LONGREACH
BARCALDINE
ARAMAC
CLERMONT
CAPELLA
EMERALD
DUARINGA
JERICHO
SPRINGSURE
ISISFORD
BLACKALL
BEDOURIE
JUNDAH
TAMBO
QUILPIE
CHARLEVILLE
MITCHELL
ROMA
YULEBA
SURAT
14°
18°
22°
26°
10°
140°
144°
148°
152°

FIGURE 2


CENTRAL QUEENSLAND
PRIORITY COUNTRY AREA
June 1988
TOTAL AREA 151 000 km²
KEY
BOUNDARY OF PRIORITY COUNTRY AREA
MAJOR ROUTES, WITH DISTANCES BETWEEN CENTRES IN KILOMETRES
SCALE 1 : 3 200 000
KILOMETRES
20 10 0 20 40 60 80 100
N
146°00′
148°00′
150°00′
20°00′
22°00′
24°00′
SOUTH PACIFIC OCEAN
CHARTERS TOWERS
MACKAY
SARINA
NEBO
MORANBAH
ST LAWRENCE
CLERMONT
DYSART
CAPELLA
BARCALDINE
ALPHA
EMERALD
COMET
BLACKWATER
ROCKHAMPTON
DINGO
DUARINGA
SPRINGSURE
BLACKALL
ROLLESTON
TAMBO
CHARLEVILLE
INJUNE
83
315
104
163
53
181
108
143
169
40
36
46
39
113
68
119
167
71
246

Industries, Activities and Resources

3.5 The outstanding features of this Central Queensland area are the range, variety and extent of natural resources, some of which are just now starting to be developed. The area contains extensive mineral resources, particularly coal, and has great potential for expansion in pastoral and agricultural pursuits.

3.6 In recent years, development in the area has received considerable impetus and impressive developments are taking place. These include the important coal mining and exporting activities, the brigalow lands development, and the Emerald Irrigation Scheme.

Coal mining

3.7 Coal, both coking and non-coking, is the key commercial mineral in the area, and very large reserves exist. A major coking coal export industry has already been established with Japan as the major outlet, and negotiations have just been completed to bring two other Central Queensland coal mine projects, Oakey Creek and German Creek, just north of Emerald, into production for export to British and European coking coal markets[1]. The initial construction force for the German Creek project will be about 1300, and a new town will be built at Middle Mount about 45 kilometres east of Clermont.

Land Settlement

3.8 As leases expire, large holdings continue to be subdivided and closer settlement is taking place. The environment is well suited to pastoral and agricultural pursuits. The area is one of the most important beef cattle regions in Australia and, as the clearing and development of brigalow scrub areas continue and pasture improvement is pursued, production will increase if the market remains satisfactory and reasonably stable.

3.9 Expansion of areas under crops is also occurring. The initial impetus for the growing of crops in the area came from the Queensland British Food Corporation (1948–1954), followed by a remarkable growth in the 1960s in dry-land farming of grains in the Springsure and Emerald areas. The soil and climate have been shown to be well suited to the growing of grain, and there is potential for further development on a large scale. The Emerald Irrigation Scheme supplied its first irrigation water through its channel system in 1972/73, but because of the water needs for township development and the requirements of the coal-mining industries, the number of farms to be served has had to be reduced.

3.10 While the area has an assured future and new mining towns will develop, there will probably remain a scattered population associated with the pastoral industry, particularly, for whom distance education, whatever form it might take in the future, will be necessary.

---

1 Reported in *The Courier-Mail*, 13 July 1979.

Table 2: Local Authorities – Central Queensland Priority Country Area (Area, Population, Schools and Enrolments for July 1977) *

ITEM	Shire								
	Bauhinia	Belyando	Broad Sound	Duaringa	Emerald	Jericho	Nebo	Peak Downs	Total
Area (square km)	24 558	30 078	18 267	17 153	10 230	21 717	10 033	8 096	150 132
Population	2 470	7 610	3 660	8 500	6 280	1 270	800	1 310	31 900
Pre-school child care centres	1	4	3	5	1	–	–	1	15
Enrolment	34	227	107	325	156	–	–	62	911
Schools State	5	4	6	8	6	2	2	1	34
non-State	1	1	–	–	1	1	–	–	4
Total	6	5	6	8	7	3	2	1	38
Primary Students State	225	1 168	481	1 493	736	184	75	174	4 536
non-State	76	76	–	–	178	44	–	–	375
Total	301	1 244	481	1 493	915	228	75	174	4 911
Secondary State Schools	7	358	–	342	435	45	4	–	1 191
non-State	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total	7	358	–	342	435	45	4	–	1 191
Primary Correspondence students	20	61	9	20	20	18	21	16	185 **

* Table 5 Shows 176 for 1979

** Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1978

Educational Provisions

3.11 The current educational provisions in terms of pre-schools and child care centres, primary and secondary schools (both state and non-state) is detailed in Table 2. Primary Correspondence Pupils are not included in the primary school totals, and details of these enrolments were obtained from the Supervisor.

3.12 It will be noted from the Table that, in the main, provision is made by the State Government. Of a total of 38 schools in the area, four only are non-state (i.e. Catholic schools), none of which is a secondary school.

3.13 The children enrolled with the Primary Correspondence School come mostly from isolated properties, some of which have only recently been settled and are still being developed, and others which have not been established very long.

3.14 Parents and children are isolated geographically and socially, an isolation aggravated until just recently by an economic recession in the beef industry. Economic conditions for the pastoralist, however, have improved considerably in the past 12 months.

3.15 It was to meet the needs of these isolated primary chidlren receiving education by correspondence that the Mobile Classroom was introduced.

CHAPTER 4

THE MOBILE CLASSROOM CONCEPT

Introduction

4.1 This chapter discusses some aspects of the Mobile Classroom Project. It considers the concept of equality in education and the purpose of providing the Mobile Classroom. A description of the Unit follows and details of the six sites on the circuit are given. Data are also provided about staffing, pupils enrolled and the distances they travel to the site.

4.2 At the end of this and succeeding chapters, issues, concerns and recommendations as perceived by the writer are mentioned and considered. In some cases, specific recommendations are made for the consideration of the Central Queensland Committee or of the Joint Committee to administer programs in Priority Country Areas.

Education Equality

4.3 'Equality of opportunity has been an important social goal which, in Australia, schools have been given the major responsibility for achieving . . . The Australian concept of equal opportunity has been confined to public schooling and has been interpreted there as equal, and in the main, uniform provision throughout the State for which each education authority is responsible'[1]. This principle of equality was implicit in the *State Education Act of 1875* which received royal assent on 10 September 1875 – an Act which made education in Queensland 'free, compulsory and secular'.

4.4 In Chapter 6 of its 1976–78 Report, the Schools Commission discussed a variety of factors which, in country areas, have made it difficult to achieve the goal of equality of provision. For example, one of the most common and generally accepted theories relating to rural disadvantage is that 'country students often suffer disadvantage directly due to the lower levels of educational service offered in many areas'[2].

---

1 Interim Committee for the Schools Commission, *Schools in Australia*, A.G.P.S., Canberra, 1973, p. 16.

2 Schools Commission, *Report: Rolling Triennium 1977–1979*, Schools Commission, Canberra, 1976, p. 65.

4.5 Such disadvantages, as Musgrave[3] mentions, are a part of contemporary social reality, so that in the framework of the Report, appropriate compensating or supplementary measures are necessary. To use the concept associated with the Plowden Report 'positive discrimination' in favour of some groups is the best that can be done to equalise opportunities. Evetts[4] points out that 'environmental deprivation is seen as a threshold variable in development of ability; environmental deprivation can keep a child from performing up to his genetic potential, so the aim is to counter the deprivation as far as possible'.

4.6 The Mobile Classroom, then, represents an attempt by the Central Queensland P.C.A.P. Committee to counter the educational deprivation resulting from the particular geographical isolation of the children, and the limited experiences provided by correspondence education.

The Mobile Classroom

4.7 Cabinet approval for the Mobile classroom Project was given on 22 November 1977. The Unit was delivered on 22 June 1978, it commenced to operate in July 1978 at Twin Hills. The Unit consists essentially of a van (7 m by 2.5 m by 2.5 m) of aluminium construction over a tubular steel frame mounted on a large diesel-powered truck. The van, custom-built to specifications determined by the Central Queensland P.C.A.P. Committee, incorporates a classroom and storage facilities for all necessary equipment for the School, and for emergency camping. Attached to the van, when it is on location, is a 7 m by 2.5 m vinyl annexe (see Appendix 1 for details).

4.8 The complete Mobile Classroom Unit can be divided into three areas:

- teaching area
- storage area
- annexe area.

The teaching area consists of two sets of adjustable and removable desks surrounded by bench-type seats. The room accommodates 10 children comfortably and the teacher-in-charge reports that it is functional, cool, light and airy.

4.9 The storage area for the room consists of a number of adjustable shelves, fixed cabinets, a work bench and a filing cabinet. Provision for air conditioning has been incorporated in the Unit to ensure effective protection for the audio-visual equipment. Storage bays similar to those in bus coaches have also been built into the side of the van for sporting, camping and other equipment.

4.10 The third area consists of a vinyl annexe, 7 m by 2.5 m, with a minimum side height of 2 metres. It has five windows and two doors. A draught sheet has been included which, attached to the bottom of the van and linked to the ground sheet, makes the annexe a sealed unit in cases of inclement weather.

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3 P. W. Musgrave, 'Changing Society: Some Underlying Assumptions of the Karmel Report', in *Changes, Issues and Prospects in Australian Education*, S. D'Urso & R. A. Smith, (eds), University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, Queensland, 1978, p. 24.

4 Julia Evetts, 'Equality of Educational Opportunity – The Recent History of the Concept', in *British Journal of Sociology*, vol. 21, no. 4, 1970, pp. 425–430.

4.11 The Unit was provided with a diesel 3KVA portable power plant for use when mains power is unavailable (mains power is available at only one of the six sites – Alpha). This generator was still being used when the School was visited on location at Mt Stuart (4 to 6 June 1979). However, it is not capable of providing sufficient power to operate the electrical equipment including the air conditioning unit. At its meeting on 8 December 1978, the Central Queensland Committee requested the replacement of this unit with one of sufficient capacity to meet all demands. At the end of June 1979, the original unit had not been replaced. It is recommended that the replacement of the present generator in use with one of sufficient output to meet all demands be expedited.

Equipment and Materials

4.12 An inspection of other equipment revealed that it was in good order and condition. Some items (e.g. tents, camp bunks and portable showers) have not been used. Such items, however, are essential emergency equipment and must remain as standard items.

4.13 The only equipment considered unsatisfactory by the writer were three foldaway tables which constitute a hazard to anyone using them, and for this reason, they are not now being used. They collapse very easily when in use, either from 'normal' child use, or from an inadvertent contact with the stays between the seats on each side of the table. It is recommended that, if the three foldaway tables cannot be made safe, they be replaced.

4.14 All other equipment is suitable and satisfactory and the planning committee is to be commended.

4.15 The fully equipped, built-in classroom can accommodate 10 children comfortably. Only two of the present sites cater for more than 10 children, at Alpha and Twin Hills. At Twin Hills, the annexe was used last year to provide for the larger group. The teacher-in-charge, however, said that it was hot, cut off the breeze from the 'truck' classroom, and is difficult to erect. For small group work, the table and seating in the caravan are used when extra teaching or learning areas are required. This arrangement with the small group at Mt Stuart was satisfactory.

Caravan

4.16 The residential caravan is comfortable and well-equipped. Over the 1978–79 midsummer vacation, action was taken to have the caravan checked, necessary repairs effected and 'strengthening' carried out. The towing mechanism in use at the time of the writer's visit was not suitable, and the caravan had jack-knifed on one occasion due to the unsuitability of the towing mechanism and because of road conditions which have also resulted in the electrical wiring, which activates the caravan's brakes, being ripped out on several occasions. It would seem that air or vacuum-operated brakes would be more suitable for the caravan because of the nature of the terrain in which it operates. Action has been taken by the P.C.A.P. Co-ordinator in Central Queensland to have both matters attended to promptly to ensure the safety of vehicles and personnel.

4.17 The use of caravan accommodation for teachers in special programs such as the Mobile Classroom was approved by the Queensland Teachers Union on 28 July 1978 when the following paragraph was added to policy 551.4:

That where teachers are employed as itinerant teachers in special programs, e.g. P.C.A.P., the Q.T.U. approves the provision of a properly equipped caravan with at least the following facilities:

- *permanent sleeping accommodation;*
- *refrigerator or and/or freezer;*
- *annexe;*
- *portable toilet;*
- *shower; and*
- *portable generator.*

Sites

4.18 Since the beginning of 1979, six carefully selected sites have been visited and the Mobile Classroom operates on a five-week cycle, two weeks at each of two sites followed by one week at the base, Clermont, for maintenance of vehicles, writing reports and correspondence, and preparation of lessons and materials for the next round of visits. In this way, each of the six sites is visited once each term and children have contact with the teacher and teacher aide or unit support officer for two or three periods, each of eight days, a year. The first day of the fortnightly period is used for travelling to the site and setting up the Classroom, and the last day for dismantling, packing up and the return to base. This arrangement, in view of the heavy demands made on the teacher, is supported.

4.19 The six sites used by the Mobile Classroom are shown in Figure 3. They are Alpha, Mt Douglas, Mt Stuart, Pioneer, Reklaw Park and Twin Hills. In selecting the sites, details were obtained of the children in each shire enrolled with the Primary Correspondence School. Parents were contacted by circular letter and asked to give information concerning their residential details; the names, ages and year level of schooling of their children; preferences in rank order for the sites nominated; and the name of a suitable contact person in the area.

Itineraries

4.20 In 1978, four sites were used but wet weather interrupted scheduled visits and only two sites, Twin Hills and Mt Douglas, were re-visited. The time table of visits for the six sites in 1979 was fixed at the beginning of the year and is unalterable. If a scheduled visit has to be curtailed, or even cancelled because of wet weather or other reason, then no adjustment is made to the schedule.

4.21 The 1979 itinerary is set out in Table 3 and includes the name of the contact person. A copy of the complete itinerary for the year is published by the Co-ordinator in the first newsletter of the year and is widely distributed. Just before the beginning of each term, a reminder of the term itinerary of the Mobile Classroom is included in the appropriate newsletter.

FIGURE 3

MOBILE CLASSROOM SITES CENTRAL QUEENSLAND

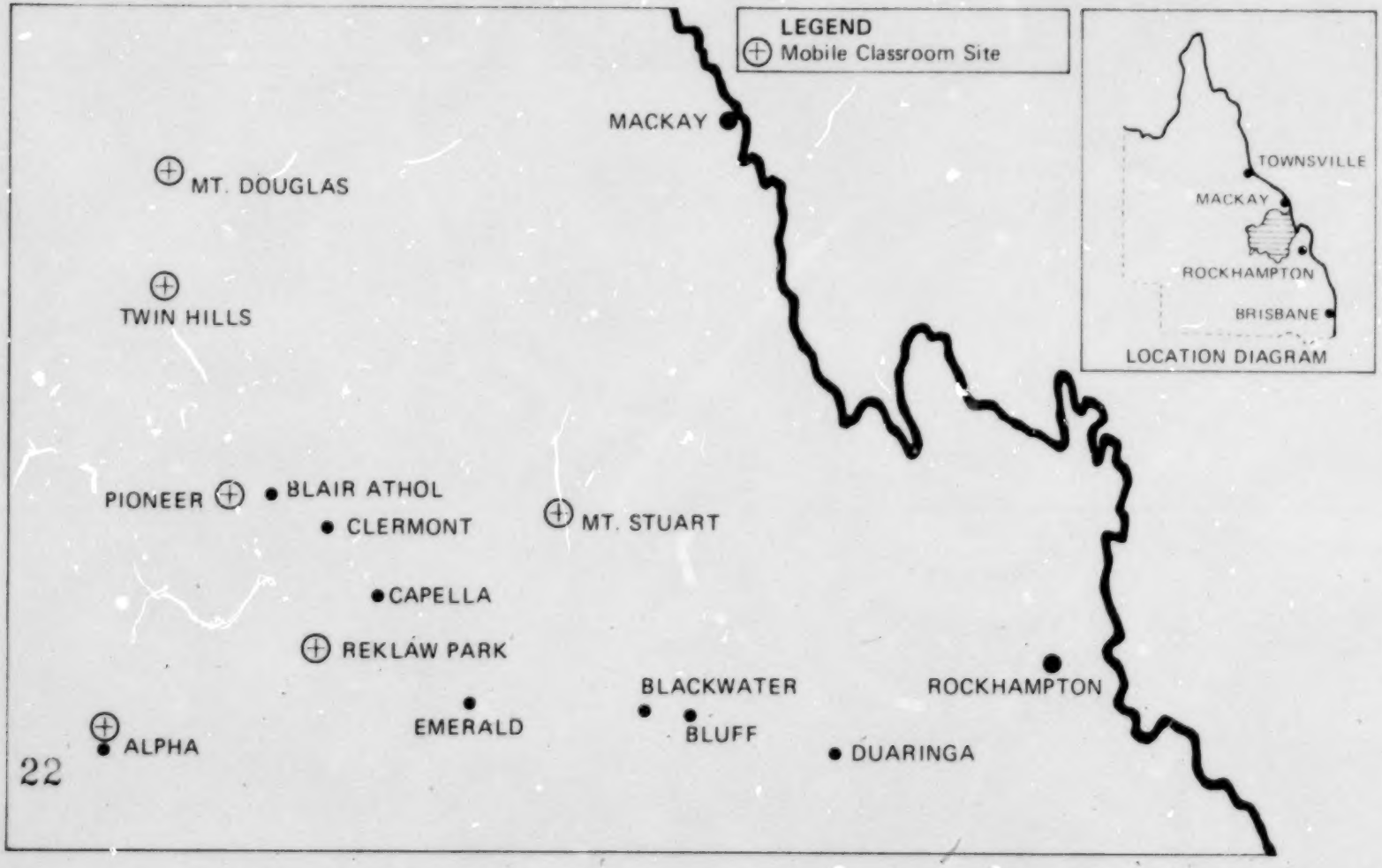


Table 3: The Mobile Classroom Itinerary (1979)

Location of site	Dates of Visits to Sites			Contact person
	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	
Mt Stuart	5.2.79–16.2.79	4.6.79–15.6.79	1.10.79–12.10.79	Mrs Denise Commisky Capella. Ph. 5S
Alpha Showgrounds	19.2.79– 2.3.79	18.6.79–29.6.79	15.10.79–26.10.79	Mrs Beryl Dyer Pine Hill: Ph. 1K
Clermont (no school)	6.3.79– 9.3.79 9.4.79–16.4.79	25.5.79– 1.6.79 2.7.79– 6.7.79 6.8.79–10.8.79	24.9.79–28.9.79 29.10.79– 2.11.79	Miss C. Hall Clermont: Ph. 27
Reklaw Park	12.3.79–23.3.79	9.7.79–20.7.79	5.11.79–16.11.79	Mrs Fay Walker Clermont: Ph. 498D
Pioneer Station	26.3.79– 6.4.79	23.7.79– 3.8.79	19.11.79–30.11.79	Miss C. Hall Clermont: Ph. 27
Twin Hills	17.4.79–28.4.79	–	27.8.79–7.9.79	Mrs Mary Mendazona Twin Hills: Ph. 12D
Mt Douglas	30.4.79– 4.5.79	21.5.79–25.5.79	10.9.79–21.9.79	Mrs Wilma Burnett Twin Hills: Ph. 8D

School of the Air keeps parents informed of the movements and location of the Mobile Classroom Unit. The local contact person and the area contact are also notified personally by the Co-ordinator. An analysis of Table 3 reveals that, in 1979, the sites at Mount Douglas and Twin Hills will receive only two visits from the Mobile Classroom while each of the remaining sites will be visited three times. This appears to be a satisfactory arrangement for this year in view of the schedule of visits made in 1978, when Twin Hills and Mt Douglas were the only sites visited more than once.

4.22 Reference to Table 3 also reveals that the Mobile Classroom is on site for two weeks – 10 teaching days. However, effective teaching days are only eight for the fortnight. Travel from base to site and the setting up are done on the Monday of the first week of the visit; dismantling and the return to base are carried out on the last Friday of the visit. A view has been expressed that, if travel to the site and setting up were done on a Sunday, and dismantling and return to base were carried out on Saturday following the visit, then a full 10 days' teaching would result and not eight days as at present. It was suggested that, to compensate the Mobile School staff for the Saturday and Sunday work, 'time-off in lieu' could be granted.

4.23 It is considered that, while the proposal has merit in so far as additional time would become available to pupils attending the school, practical considerations, such as the following would militate against its implementation:

- The staff of the Mobile Classroom are entitled to have their weekends free as are other teachers and ancillary staff attached to a school. The Mobile School staff already give very readily and very generously additional time to the parents and the children at the different sites, and perform duties outside their normal teaching duties, (see 6.22). Before and after school, the teacher is advising, assisting and encouraging home supervisors who daily visit the Classroom site; or when the staff visit homes of the children's parents. To ask the staff to give more of their time, particularly at weekends when they have an opportunity for sport or other pursuits, would be unfair and unreasonable.
- 'Time-off in lieu' is a standard practice in secondary schools and technical colleges where a part-time appointment is not warranted, and also in primary schools where teachers do special duty as, for example, in connection with school camps. It is computed as time-and-a-half off for time worked. In the case of the Mobile Classroom, it would mean six days off for four days worked on the Saturdays and Sundays of each period in the field. This would then necessitate a fortnight's lay period at base, six days' time-off, and four days for preparation, correspondence, report writing and vehicle maintenance. The Mobile Classroom work cycle would then become a six-week work cycle and not a five-week cycle as at present. This would reduce the number of visits. Applying the six-week cycle to the 1979 situation, and using Table 3 as a basis, it would mean four visits fewer in a year. In 1979, for example, Mt Douglas, Pioneer, Reklaw and Twin Hills would receive two visits instead of three.

4.24 For these reasons, it is recommended that the present arrangements regarding the Mobile Classroom circuit, travelling arrangements and teaching time at each site remain.

4.25 A brief description of the sites currently used by the Mobile Classroom is tabulated in Table 4.

State Emergency Services

4.26 The P.C.A.P. Co-ordinator in this Priority Country Area has informed the police at Rockhampton of the operation of the Mobile Classroom, the names of sites, the locations of the sites, and contact persons. These have been 'registered' with State Emergency Services. All local police stations have also been advised. Arrangements have been made with the police and State Emergency Services that, if an emergency arises, the necessary action to notify the Service and bring it into action would be done by the Regional Director of Education, Central Region, or by the Catholic Diocesan Director of Education, Rockhampton.

4.27 At a number of sites, ready and quick access to a telephone is not available in the case of an emergency, nor is the Mobile Classroom equipped with a radio telephone or transceiver. It is therefore recommended that either the Mobile Classroom vehicle or the prime mover of the caravan be equipped with a transceiver or two-way radio for emergency purposes.

Table 4: Brief Description: Mobile Classroom Sites, Central Queensland (June 1979)

Site	Location	Features	Comments
Alpha	Alpha Showgrounds.	240V, A.C. power; town water; septic	Most Comfortable; $17.00 per week; Jericho Shire Council
Mt Stuart	About 100km from Clermont via Capella.	Site graded and gravelled by Shire Council; grazier supplies water.	Site selected by parents; nearest phone 1–2km; garbage, etc. disposed of by local resident.
Mt Douglas	At Mt Douglas homestead 120km north of Clermont on Gregory Development Road.	Children stay at homestead or travel daily; septic; owners most helpful.	The most 'needy' site; phone at homestead; service station at Belyando River, 7km away.
Pioneer	About 66km from Clermont, 20km west of Blair Athol.	Near homestead; tank water available; septic.	Smallest enrolment (5)– 10 or 11 for 1980; phone 100m away at homestead.
Twin Hills	Site 2km from phone exchange at site of community sports ground.	Water available; complex has race course, tennis courts, playground equipment, etc	Black soil, flat; phone 1–2 km; all pupils travel daily.
Reklaw Park	About 80kms from Clermont.	Spetic and water provided; own power generator used.	Only site not visited by the writer; owners very helpful.

Staffing of Mobile Classroom Unit

4.28 In 1978, staff consisted of two teachers – a teacher-in-charge and another teacher – and a unit support officer. Both teachers were experienced young teachers. One teacher, however, took up duty from the beginning of 1979 as an itinerant remedial-resource teacher assisting secondary students and teachers of Clermont, Alpha, Dysart and Springsure. She was not replaced, as the Central Committee decided to trial the Mobile Classroom with one teacher plus one support officer in 1979.

4.29 The teacher-in-charge is a young, energetic, industrious and capable teacher. She is liked by parents, children and members of the community, to all of whom she relates very well indeed. She has given freely to her time, professional skills and talents for the benefit of children and parents.

4.30 In 1978, the teacher-in-charge tried a number of initiatives in the use of staff at two different centres, Twin Hills and Alpha,where numbers of pupils were 17 and 14 respectively. Such initiatives included 'splitting' the staff, with one teacher using the Mobile Classroom and the other being located in a permanent building, such as Pasha School or the Reklaw Park shed. However, because of the difficulties associated with divided equipment and materials, the need for setting up two sites, the reduced numbers of children for interaction, and the reaction of parents who tended to see the teacher who was not in the Mobile Classroom as a visiting or itinerant teacher, a decision was made to use the Mobile Classroom exclusively as the School centre. In any case, as mentioned above, there has been only one teacher with the Mobile Classroom in 1979.

4.31 Prior to their taking up duty with the Mobile Classroom, both teachers visited the Primary Correspondence School to meet the Supervisor and staff and to discuss the function of the Mobile Classroom and its relationship with the Primary Correspondence School. Visits were also made to the teacher-in-charge of the Isolated Children's Special Education Unit. Since that time, there have been no further visits, although the teacher-in-charge of the Mobile Classroom reports regularly on the children attending the Primary Correspondence School and has returned a total of more than 70 individual reports. However, at present, communication from the Primary Correspondence School to the Mobile Classroom and liaison between the two are not satisfactory. This matter is further discussed in Chapter 6.

4.32 The unit support officer is responsible for ordering, transport and delivery of necessary stores; for the service and maintenance of particular items of equipment; and assists in the establishment and dismantling activities at each school site. She also assists as a teacher aide. The present incumbent is a very competent person, used to life in western areas, who works very well with the teacher-in-charge, relates well to the children and parents, and has contributed greatly to the successful working of the Unit. She will be resigning as unit supply officer at the end of second term 1979 as she and her husband are leaving the district.

Pupils

4.33 With the exception of three children who live either in the Dalrymple or Bowen Shires very close to the Mt Douglas site, all children attending the Mobile Classroom are domiciled within the eight shires included in the Central Queensland Priority Country Area. The distribution of children enrolled with the Queensland Primary Correspondence School by year of schooling is illustrated in Table 5 and a comparison is made of the number of such children with their distribution in each of the eight shires in the area, and with children enrolled with the Mobile Classroom.

4.34 A study of Table 5 reveals that a total of 176 children, or about 11.6 per cent of the total number of 1503 children enrolled in June 1979 with the Primary Correspondence School, are domiciled within the eight shires. Of the 176 children in the shires, 58, or about 33 per cent of the total, attend the Mobile Classroom, representing approximately four per cent of the total number of children enrolled with the Primary Correspondence School.

Table 5: Distribution of Primary Correspondence Pupils

Location	No. of Families	Number of Pupils Enrolled by Year of Schooling							Total
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Primary Correspondence School	–	294	240	260	217	198	163	131	1 503
Central Queensland P.C.A.P. – Shires									
Bauhinia	12	3	5	2	4	3	1	3	21*
Belyando	38	5	7	11	11	8	13	6	61
Broad Sound	2	–	–	–	2	–	–	1	3
Duaringa	11	3	1	6	4	3	2	2	21*
Emerald	13	5	1	4	3	2	2	2	19*
Jericho	11	3	2	4	3	7	–	1	20
Nebo	11	1	3	2	2	4	2	2	16*
Peak Downs	8	3	2	3	3	1	3	–	15*
Total	106	23	21	32	32	28	23	17	176
Mobile Classroom	36	9	7	9	13	10	7	3	58

* No Mobile Classroom site in these shires

Table 6: Distribution of Children Enrolled with the Mobile Classroom (June 1979)

Year of School	Mobile Classroom Site						Total
	Alpha	Mt Douglas	Mt Stuart	Pioneer	Reklaw Park	Twin Hills	
7	1	–	–	–	1	1	3
6	–	2	–	–	2	3	7
5	5	3	1	–	–	1	10
4	3	–	3	–	3	4	13
3	2	2	–	1	2	2	9
2	1	–	2	4	–	–	7
1	2	1	2	–	2	2	9
Total (A)	14	8	8	5	10	13	58
Pre-school (B)	2	2	2	5	1	2	14
Total (A & B)	16	10	10	10	11	15	72
Number of Families (Primary pupils)	7	6	5	4	6	8	36

4.35 Children attending the School come from varying distances. Distances in many cases are so great that the children cannot travel daily to and from the Classroom site and so a variety of arrangements exists at the sites for accommodating the children. At Alpha, six children board with relatives in town; six other children are cared for by two mothers who hire the C.W.A. rooms and facilities at $25 per week for the two weeks that the school is on site; and two others travel daily. At Mt Douglas, the owner of the station and his wife accommodated all seven children and their own child, plus two mothers, for the fortnight in 1978. In 1979, four children travelled daily. At Mt Stuart, all children but one are close enough to the site to travel daily. One child boards with friends and travels daily. At Twin Hills in 1978, three parents camped on site with their children, but this year, 1979, because of changed enrolments, all travel daily. At Pioneer, only one child boards with relatives, as does one child at Reklaw. However, one mother with two children will use a caravan at Reklaw for future visits of the Mobile Classroom as she found travelling 160 km daily too much because the roads are in poor condition.

Distances Travelled by Pupils

4.36 The distances travelled by, and accommodation arrangements made for, the children enrolled with the Mobile Classroom have been summarised and tabulated in Table 7.

4.37 Despite the long distances, parents are strongly supportive of the teachers and programs and of the service being provided by the Mobile Classroom. These are discussed in the following chapters.

Issues, Concerns, Recommendations

- Paragraph 4.11: The portable 3KVA generator is inadequate to meet demands. However, arrangements are in hand for its replacement.
- Paragraph 4.13: Three fold-away tables are considered a hazard. If they cannot be satisfactorily repaired, they should be replaced immediately.
- Paragraph 4.16: The caravan's towing mechanism is unsatisfactory and potentially dangerous. The electrically-activated braking system has frequently become inoperable because of road conditions. Vacuum operated brakes would appear more suited to local needs. The Co-ordinator has this matter in hand.
- Paragraph 4.27: For emergency use, the Unit should be equipped with a transceiver or similar item of equipment. This is considered urgent in the interests of all concerned.

Table 7: Distances of Pupils from the Mobile Classroom Site and the Accommodation Arrangements (June 1979)

Site	Enrolment	Distance from Home to Mobile Classroom					No. Travelling Daily	Accommodation Arrangements at Site
		0–4.8 km	4.8–16 km	16–32 km	32–48 km	Over 48 km		
Alpha	14	–	–	–	–	14	2	C.W.A. rooms rented, 6 pupils, 2 parents; 6 pupils board in town with relatives.
Mt Douglas	8	1	–	2	4	1	4 (one pupil lives on-site)	In 1978, all pupils and two parents accommodated at homestead; this year, 1979, four pupils travel.
Mt Stuart	8	1	–	4	2	1	7	One pupil boards and travels daily, two 48 km trips.
Pioneer	5	–	1	2	1	1	4	One child boards and travels daily with cousin, two 30 km trips.
Reklaw	10	3	–	–	3	4	7	One child boards; one parent plans to camp on site in caravan.
Twin Hills	13	1	3	2	6	1	13	None boarding; in 1978, three parents camped on-site.
Total	58	6	4	10	16	22		

CHAPTER 5

SUPPORT SERVICES TO THE MOBILE CLASSROOM

Introduction

5.1 The Mobile Classroom is one of a series of initiatives implemented by the Queensland Priority Country Area Program and directed at complementing and supplementing the work of the Primary Correspondence School by providing enriching and appropriate educational opportunities for children to investigate, communicate and express their individuality. This section and the next section of the Report consider the services that support the Mobile Classroom and the services provided by it. The conceptual model for the two sections is illustrated in Figure 4.

Support Services – Local Level

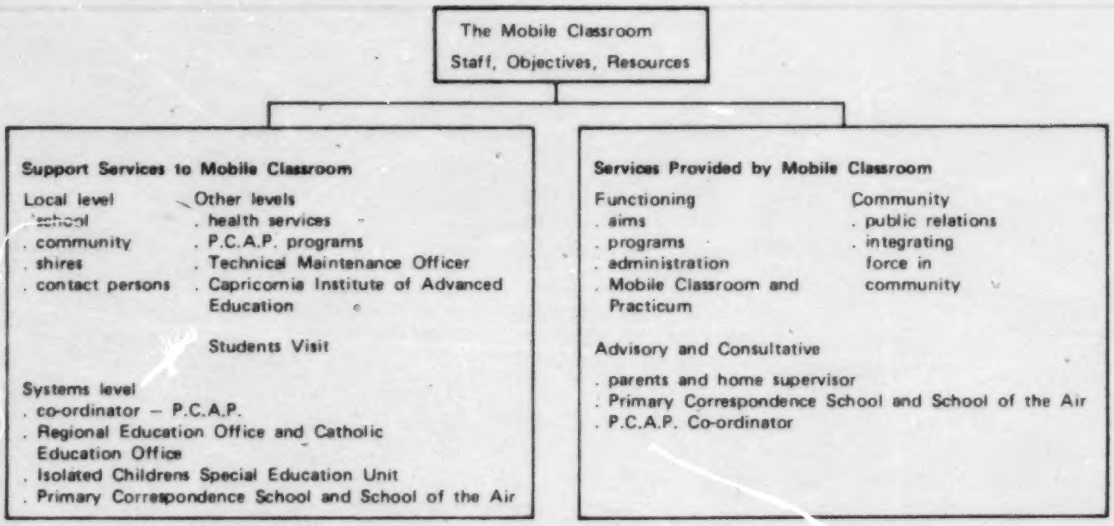
5.2 Local schools (both state and Catholic) at Clermont, the base for the Mobile Classroom, and at Alpha, one of the Mobile Classroom sites, provide strong support not only to the Mobile Classroom itself but to parents, home supervisors and children enrolled with the Primary Correspondence School. The Principals of each of the Clermont and Alpha schools make their services and those of members of school staff freely and readily available whenever requested. The libraries and resources at both schools are also available to all who want to use them. The Principal at Clermont Convent, for example, uses a video-cassette recorder to record programs requested by the Mobile Classroom teacher who cannot tape the lessons direct, and the teacher-in-charge of the Mobile Classroom then uses the taped lessons to fit into her own program. One of the parents of a child enrolled with the Primary Correspondence School brings her child to the Convent one day a week so that the child will have peer group contact and the other essential experiences of attendance at school. Other parents bring their children to the schools for sport each week. The Principal at Clermont State School makes an area under the school available to parents, home supervisors and children on activity days and participates himself by taking music and singing lessons with the children attending the school for the activity day.

Activity days

5.3 Activity days are programs of activities and experiences conducted once a month by parents and home supervisors for children enrolled with the Primary Correspondence School, in aspects of the curriculum normally not available to children on correspondence lessons. In doing so, parents seek the advice and assistance of principals and also of the P.C.A.P. Co-ordinator in Central Queensland who, for example, suggested the theme and planned the activities for the first activity day held at Alpha, and continues to provide strong support and help to the parents. Alpha, Twin Hills and Clermont are centres for a monthly activity day. The program supports, complements and reinforces the services provided by the Mobile Classroom. It aims at developing the child through enriching educational experiences. On activity days, parents and home supervisors are encouraged by the school principals to let the children participate in the organised school sports programs in the afternoon. At an activity day just prior to my visit to Alpha, some 13 parents attended with their children.

Figure 4

. Mobile Classroom Support Services



Parent and community support

5.4 Parents and the community are very supportive of the Mobile Classroom, its staff and programs. This must be attributed, in no small part, to the planning and organisation of the P.C.A.P. Co-ordinator and to the work of the Mobile Classroom staff. Very strong co-operative relationships have been established between the Classroom, parents and others in the community, thus ensuring that all resources are used for maximum benefit. Numerous examples abound of parent and community support, for example, in the preparation of the site, by the provision of essential services and facilities while on site, in providing supervision during lesson breaks, and through the use of the homestead and its facilities for accommodation, swimming lessons, concerts and meetings of parents. The operator of the Twin Hills exchange, who does not have a child attending the Mobile Classroom, is the local contact person for the school. Parents are kept fully informed of all P.C.A.P. initiatives through a monthly newsletter written and widely distributed by the Co-ordinator. The regularity of this communication together with the work of the contact persons in the field, is contributing significantly to the successful functioning of the Mobile Classroom which is so dependent upon external as well as internal human resources.

Contact persons

5.5 The contact persons operate at two levels, local and area. The six area contacts, all women, constitute a decentralised network of people. They are members of the P.C.A.P. Central Queensland Committee, and are articulate, energetic, co-operative to a high degree and constitute one of the great strengths of that Committee. They are very involved in community activities in their own area; are experienced in committees of different kinds; some have had children at the Primary Correspondence School; and one is a supply teacher in Alpha and an external student of the University of Queensland. In short, they are people who have many interests, many contacts and many sources of information; they are cognisant of the whole spectrum of activities in their own area and elsewhere; and consequently are fully informed and aware of needs of the community in that area. They are able to present such needs at P.C.A.P. meetings which are held about every six weeks. In the period between meetings, the Co-ordinator would have contacted each person once or twice, and in turn would have been contacted at least once or twice by the area contact and also by the local contact person.

5.6 The local contact person's main duties centre round the visit of the Mobile Classroom. Prior to the visit, she reminds parents of the dates, sees that the site is in readiness, and notifies the teacher-in-charge and the Co-ordinator accordingly. She also informs the Co-ordinator about general conditions at the site, the number of children attending, and of any particular needs. At the end of the visit, she again contacts the Co-ordinator, commenting on the visit, the program, and the general feeling and reaction of children, parents and the community to the visit. There is thus a continuing flow of information and the functioning of the Mobile Classroom can be kept under review. These people are also vital to the success of other P.C.A.P. initiatives.

5.7 The contact persons are perhaps the Co-ordinator's greatest strength in the administration of the Mobile Classroom and the numerous other programs of the Central Committee, and a source of real support and strength to the staff of the Mobile Classroom itself.

Local Government support

5.8 The six Mobile Classroom sites are located in three shires – one in Jericho Shire (Alpha); one in Broad Sound Shire (Mt Stuart); and four in Belyando Shire (Mt Douglas, Pioneer, Reklaw Park and Twin Hills). Table 8 gives details of the distribution of children enrolled with the Mobile Classroom. In the matter of sites, and in other ways, the shires have been helpful and supportive of the Mobile Classroom. For example, in the Jericho Shire, the site is at Alpha showgrounds with the site, water, power and light available for a reasonable rental; the Belyando Shire at Clermont provides library resource material for Twin Hills activity days, the services of the librarian, and also the library facilities themselves, to parents and children; the Broad Sounds Shire levelled and gravelled the Mt Stuart site and provided toilet facilities.

Table 8: Number of Primary Correspondence Children Enrolled with the Mobile Classroom (June 1979)

P.C.A.P. Shires	Children Enrolled Primary Correspondence School	Children Enrolled Mobile Classroom	Classroom Sites	
			No.	Location
Bauhinia	21	–	–	–
Belyando	61	29	4	Mt Douglas Twin Hills Pioneer Reklaw
Broad Sound	3	–	1	Mt Stuart
Duaringa	21	2	–	–
Emerald	19	3	–	–
Jericho	20	14	–	Alpha
Nebo	16	–	–	–
Peak Downs	15	7		
Total	176	55	6	—
Non-P.C.A.P. Shires	–	–	–	–
Bowen	No details	2	–	–
Dalrymple	No details	1	–	–
Total	—	3	—	—
Total P.C.A.P. and non-P.C.A.P.	176	58	6	–

Support Services – Systems Level

The P.C.A.P. Co-ordinator for Central Queensland

5.9 The key person in the administration of the programs introduced to the Central Queensland Priority Country Area is the Co-ordinator, and the Committee is indeed fortunate in having the services of such a highly skilled and industrious resource person. She possesses conceptual and managerial skills of a very high order, and has an extensive knowledge of the area and its people. She is a warm, humane person, ensures that communications do not go one way only, and is sensitive to feedback from people and programs operating in her area. Morale, therefore, is very high, and she is providing strong inspirational leadership that is ensuring not only the smooth and successful implementation of programs, but also the attainment of maximum potential.

5.10 Her role of Co-ordinator is that of an active field person involved in meetings and discussions with country people in their own environment. This role includes that of:

- co-ordinator for existing programs in consultation with the area contact persons to ensure their smooth running for the initiator, for the personnel involved in program implementation and for the recipients. She also co-ordinates the itineraries of other field personnel, such as the technical maintenance officer and the secondary remedial resource teacher, again in consultation with them.
- communicator, keeping the Regional Director of Education and the Diocesan Director of Catholic Education (who are Chairman and Deputy Chairman respectively of the Priority Country Area Program Committee) fully informed of current programs, and keeping them up-to-date with all information. Through regular and frequent contact, she keeps local and area contact persons informed, and is, in turn, informed by them. At the direction of the Committee, she attends meetings of the Joint Committee of the Priority Country Area Program in Brisbane and, when necessary, acts as the Central Committee's advocate at those meetings. Through the newsletter, she informs parents, teachers and field officers, the Primary Correspondence School, the Mobile School, Schools of the Air, and community organisations of activities, decisions, coming events and itineraries.
- liaison and resource person between the Central Committee and the Joint Committee, regarding programs in operation. She contacts schools to disseminate information regarding programs in operation or planned in that area, and helps to promote a better understanding of P.C.A.P. As a resource person, she assists parents with programs for activity days, provides ideas for ROCTAPUS, and advises, encourages and assists groups and communities to develop proposals for submission to the Central Committee.
- organiser, by being responsible for the organisation and development of new centres for activity days; and by providing the necessary liaison and assistance for tours of cultural groups, educational tours, and sports day programs.
- evaluator, in reports to the Central Committee on the programs she has observed and evaluated. As a result of her contacts with the various communities in the priority area, the programs that are being implemented, the changes that are occurring as a result of economic trends in the area's industries, the mining and other developments that are occurring, she has an overview and general awareness of the significance of these changes and is able to make value judgments, in terms of P.C.A.P. policy, for consideration and decision by the Central Committee. Here again, the area and local contact persons make important contributions from their perspective and add a special dimension to the views of the Co-ordinator and the Central Committee.

Co-ordinator's vehicle

5.11 As an active field officer, the Co-ordinator was recently provided with a vehicle to allow flexibility in her field work. This vehicle is rapidly approaching the replacement stage. When a new vehicle is being ordered, it is recommended that the present station sedan be replaced by another station sedan complete with radio, and additional items necessary for vehicles on western gravel and unformed roads, such as heavy duty springs and special sump-protecting steel plate. It is considered that a radio in the vehicle is necessary as a precautionary measure for weather reports, and as an essential item of equipment for any field officer travelling long distances alone in this country.

5.12 The Co-ordinator administers some 12 programs for the Central P.C.A.P. Committee. Some of these programs are ongoing, such as the Mobile Classroom, the Remedial-Resource Itinerant Teacher Service (Secondary), the Technical Maintenance Officer Service, the deployment of P.C.A.P. buses, library up-grading, ROCTAPUS and resource kits. Other programs are 'seasonal' ones, such as the Capricornia Institute of Advanced Education student visits to isolated children's homes, the Capricornia IAE Practicum – Mobile Classroom, summer schools, a drama tour, and the orchestra tour by a visiting high school. Such programs, their planning, organisation and co-ordination, generate a great deal of office work.

5.13 The co-ordinator is also the General Secretary to the Central P.C.A.P. Committee and, in this capacity, takes the minutes, types them up, and circulates copies, as well as undertaking correspondence, and the preparation of reports and submissions which evolve from these meetings.

5.14 The duties enumerated and detailed in paragraphs 5.9 to 5.13 are very demanding. At certain times they are too much for one person, unless inordinately long hours are worked to cope with the work-load. It is considered essential that a clerical assistant be provided in the office as soon as possible. This assistant would perform general office and support duties, including opening and dispatching mail and answering the telephone; photocopying and duplicating; some typing duties (e.g. minutes of meetings, newsletters, itineraries and correspondence); and filing correspondence and keeping records. Such assistance would be routine, such as is performed by a clerk-typist. The position would not be a full-time one, but about 15 to 20 hours per week.

It is therefore recommended that a clerk-typist or clerical assistant be appointed part-time to the Co-ordinator, working 15 hours per week. A work study should be made of the Co-ordinator's work so that the position and appointment, hours of work and duties of the clerk-typist be reviewed as a result of the findings.

Catholic Education Office and State Regional Education Office

5.15 Both the Catholic Diocesan Director of Education and the State Regional Director of Education are strongly supportive of the Mobile Classroom, and of the Co-ordinator, who has office accommodation at the Catholic Education Office. Both Directors receive regular communications and reports concerning the functioning of the Mobile Classroom from the Co-ordinator. The Co-ordinator has attended a meeting of staff inspectors and inspectors of schools to brief these officers on her role, as well as on the Mobile Classroom and its activities. Copies of Regional Office memoranda which go to schools in the Region also go to the Mobile Classroom. Both the Catholic Education Office and the State Regional Education Office have resource personnel on staff whose services are readily available to the Mobile Classroom – the Catholic Office librarian has recommended a series of readers with high interest level but low reading level for use with selected children, and the regional physical education officer is available at all times for advice and assistance.

Mobile Classroom and inspector of schools

5.16 To June 1979, the Mobile Classroom had not been visited by a school inspector, due mainly to the demands made on the time of the district inspector, particularly those of appraisement of teachers in second term, and the itinerary of the Mobile Classroom.

5.17 A visit from an inspector would be a source of great encouragement to the teacher-in-charge, helping to sustain her interest and to stimulate her professional growth; and would benefit the children attending the Mobile Classroom. The inspector's discussion of the school's philosophy and practices, his advice on the curriculum, his advice on teaching strategies, and his observations during the visit would provide a ready, on-the-spot and informed assessment of pupil achievement in skills and knowledge; and his discussions with the teacher on educational principles, practices and processes would be supportive, enlightening, encouraging and stimulating. It is recommended that an approach be made to the Regional Director of Education, Rockhampton, with a view to having a district inspector pay an annual, incidental visit to the Mobile Classroom so that the teaching staff and the pupils will benefit from his professional experience and expertise.

Primary Correspondence School and School of the Air

5.18 The Supervisor of the Primary Correspondence School visited Clermont at the end of May 1979, and met the parents of children enrolled with the Primary Correspondence School, some of whom were also attending the Mobile Classroom. The Supervisor's visit was to discuss with parents and home supervisors, the Primary Correspondence School's provisions for its pupils, and to obtain parents' perceptions regarding these provisions. He took the opportunity to inspect the Mobile Classroom and to discuss its functioning with the teacher-in-charge.

5.19 Apart from this visit and discussion, and the visit of the Mobile Classroom teachers to the Primary Correspondence School prior to the commencement of the Mobile Classroom operations, there have been little further communication and liaison. The Primary Correspondence School has been sent regular reports on each of the pupils following the visit of the Mobile Classroom by the teacher-in-charge (60 reports to the end of June 1979) but there has been no response to these reports from the Primary Correspondence School. There is need for improved liaison and communication between the Primary Correspondence School and the Mobile Classroom (see 6.29). The report form supplied by the Primary Correspondence School, which was developed for use by School of the Air and itinerant teachers, has been modified by the teacher-in-charge to suit her needs and those of the Mobile Classroom situation. The teacher-in-charge sees the need, too, for the use of standardised tests in basic subjects so that an objective and invaluable, assessment of achievement could be made available to primary correspondence teachers. Action was taken on this matter with the Principal Guidance Officer, Brisbane.

5.20 The teacher-in-charge of the Mobile Classroom has also reported informally to the teacher-in-charge of the School of the Air at Charleville when she considered it necessary, and the exchange of information has been useful and beneficial. The two Schools of the Air at Cairns and Charleville, which have children attending the Mobile Classroom, report regularly on all their pupils to the Primary Correspondence School and there is good communication both ways. Some of this information could be helpful to the teacher-in-charge of the Mobile Classroom, and the Supervisor of the Primary Correspondence School proposes to pass on any such information.

5.21 The two Schools of the Air also pass on information through their Parents and Citizens Association and the Royal Flying Doctor Service network of the movements, location sites and dates of visits of the Mobile Classroom. The interrelationship of the Primary Correspondence School, the Mobile Classroom and the various other facilities and services supporting and enriching Primary Correspondence School programs is further considered in Chapter 8, while the need for exchanges of information about pupils is discussed in paragraphs 6.29 to 6.33.

Support Services – Other Levels

Isolated Children's Special Education Unit

5.22 The Isolated Children's Special Education Unit has been in contact with the teacher-in-charge of the Mobile Classroom and has informed her of the services available. These include information about materials, equipment and teaching strategies to assist in the teaching of children with educational handicaps or learning disabilities; a speech therapy referral service; and a tutor training service. Teachers from the Isolated Children's Special Education Unit have also toured the Central Priority Country Area.

5.23 One child with a speech disability was referred to the Isolated Children's Special Education Unit from the Mobile Classroom. Action in this child's case had also been taken by the Pre-School Correspondence section, and, later, by the child's teacher at the Primary Correspondence School. As the child's parents are within reasonable access to Rockhampton, arrangements were made by the teacher-in-charge of the Mobile Classroom, Regional Guidance Service and the speech therapists at Rockhampton to interview the parents and the child and to provide the necessary remedial program.

5.24 The Isolated Children's Special Education Unit has supplied a number of individual parents whose children attended the June 1979 camp school at Tallebudgera with Tutor Training kits. The teacher-in-charge of the Mobile Classroom has also been provided with a complete set of these kits, which include:

- *Playing-Learning Games*
- *Word Attack Skills*
- *Sight Words*
- *Reading – How to Help*
- *The School in the Home*
- *Spelling*
- *Learning to Think*

5.25 The Isolated Children's Special Education Unit has offered to make available to the Mobile Classroom, if required, the same service that it is developing for teachers in small country schools where there may be developmentally slower learning children. They are currently developing some of the programs used in special schools to suit the needs of class teachers in small schools, who may have a severely educationally handicapped child. When this program is developed, it will provide:

- a statement and definition of goals;
- a sequence of skill objectives directed towards these goals;
- a relating of tasks to objectives;
- a matching of tasks and objectives to areas of the primary school syllabus; and
- recommendations regarding useful teaching techniques and practices.

Capricornia Institute of Advanced Education

5.26 This Institute is represented on the Central Queensland Priority Country Area Committee. It is strongly supportive of the programs, and has made a significant contribution by developing a number of particularly pertinent initiatives for implementation in this area. These include the Students Visit Isolated Children Scheme and the Mobile Classroom Practicum for third year students.

Other suggested programs submitted for consideration have been a telephone educational advisory service, and a language experience program for children from isolated areas. These are still under consideration.

Capricornia IAE Visits

5.27 This scheme has been established as a pilot project to test the value to the isolated child of sending a student teacher to stay with the child and his family for one week during vacation time. Travel expenses for the student are met from P.C.A.P. funds and full board and lodging are provided by the family visited, but students receive no pay. The visit aims at providing stimulation of the child's oral language from contact with an adult in an education setting. In the period of the semester vacation 25 June to 6 July 1979, some 16 families availed themselves of the opportunity, 10 of them families with children attending the Mobile Classroom.

The Mobile Classroom – a practising school

5.28 Arrangements have been made by the Chairman, School of Education, Capricornia IAE, and the P.C.A.P. Co-ordinator to use the Mobile Classroom for a four weeks' practicum for one of the Institute's third-year trainee teachers. The young lady will participate in the functioning of the school at three different sites: 9 to 13 July 1979 (one week) Reklaw Park; 8 to 12 October 1979 (one week) Mt Stuart; and 15 to 26 October 1979 (two weeks) Alpha.

This very interesting initiative had not occurred at the time of my visit, but the proposal is recorded because of its significance in this student's studies, whereby theory will be related to practice, and because of its significance in the preparation of teachers for distance education.

School Health Services

5.29 The Division of School Health Services provided the teacher-in-charge with the checklist designed by the Director to assist teachers in identifying children who should be referred for further testing. It is noted that the Ahern Committee, in commending this checklist, recommended that 'a similar pamphlet should be produced for parents. The pamphlet should be freely available to parents of children of any age and should, in any case, be an automatic issue to the parents of every child on entry to Year 1'[1].

5.30 The teacher-in-charge identified and took appropriate action regarding a child with a speech defect (see 5.24), two children with visual defects and one child with a hearing defect. In one case, the child was assisted by the Bush Children's Health Scheme, and in the case of the other two children, parents took appropriate action.

5.31 Emerald has a community health centre with three sisters trained to do school health work. They visit Blackwater, Anakie, Capella, Springsure and Clermont. Children may be referred to the centre at Emerald, which is serviced regularly by a medical officer.

Other Priority Country Area Programs

5.32 As mentioned above (see 5.12), there were 12 programs operating in the central Queensland Priority Country Area in 1978–79. Some of these programs support the Mobile Classroom, its pupils and parents, such as:

- the technical maintenance officer;
- the Capricornia Institute of Advanced Education student visits to isolated children's homes (see 5.28);
- summer schools; and
- cultural tours.

5.34 The technical maintenance officer has the responsibility of visiting schools in the P.C.A.P. area, including the Mobile Classroom, according to the itinerary planned with the Co-ordinator. This officer, who is based at Rockhampton State High School, carries out maintenance on equipment and is consulted on the technical adequacy of various items. In addition to servicing the Mobile Classroom equipment, he is also available for checking tape recorders and cassettes used for primary correspondence lessons.

5.35 The first summer school under the auspices of the Central P.C.A.P. Committee was held at Rockhampton in 1977, and following its success, two were held simultaneously in 1978, one at Charters Towers and the other at Rockhampton. The summer schools were a further support service, in conjunction with the Mobile Classroom and the School of the Air, to the Primary Correspondence School, and were directed at reinforcing programs and activities. They provide activities and experiences that would advance basic skills in literacy and numeracy, contribute to the social development of children, as well as providing access to screening programs conducted by officers from the Special Education Division of the Queensland Department of Education.

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1 Select Committee on Education in Queensland (Third Interim Report, M. Ahern, Chairman), *Literacy and Numeracy*, Queensland Government Printer, Brisbane, 1979.

5.36 Whereas the Mobile Classroom and School of the Air cater for small groups, summer schools catered for larger groups (e.g. 60 at Charters Towers and 80 at Rockhampton), most of whom were enrolled with Primary Correspondence School. Some of these children were also enrolled with the Mobile Classroom; others came from small schools. The summer schools provide greater opportunity for peer group interaction than the Mobile Classroom, where the relationship of pupils is more like a non-competitive, family hierarchical structure. For example, at the Rockhampton summer school, there were 24 children from lower primary, 34 from middle primary and 17 from upper primary.

Conclusion

5.37 The Mobile Classroom project has been well received, is well supported at all levels, and is well administered. Chapter 6 considers the services provided by the Mobile Classroom.

Issues, Concerns, Recommendations

- Paragraph 5.11: The Co-ordinator's vehicle is due for replacement. It is recommended that it be replaced by another station sedan, complete with radio and 'country pack'.
- Paragraph 5.14: Clerical assistance for the Co-ordinator is recommended, initially, for 15 hours a week. A work study of the Co-ordinator's role and activities should be carried out, and a decision made regarding the part-time appointment of a clerical assistant.
- Paragraph 5.17: It is recommended that a district inspector visit the Mobile Classroom annually for the benefit of the teaching staff and pupils.
- Paragraph 5.19: There is need for better liaison and communication between the Primary Correspondence School and the Mobile Classroom.

CHAPTER 6

THE MOBILE CLASSROOM AND THE SERVICES PROVIDED

Introduction

6.1 By its nature and particular constraints, is is often not possible for correspondence education to provide adequate and appropriate opportunities to develop fully basic skills through communication, expression and investigation. Opportunities for speaking, listening, reading and reciting; for singing, dancing, drama and verbal expression; for questioning, answering, comparing, measuring, estimating, calculating and speculating (all of which contribute to the acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values) are severely limited or impossible to provide satisfactorily by correspondence.

6.2 As mentioned before (see 4.6), the Mobile Classroom represents an attempt by P.C.A.P. to counter educational disadvantage resulting from the geographical isolation of the children in this part of Queensland, and the necessarily limited experiences that can be provided through correspondence education.

Aims and Objectives

6.3 In its original submission to the Joint Committee, the Central Queensland Committee stated the objectives of the Mobile Classroom to be:

- to widen and enrich the educational experiences of children in the area through the application of the complete primary school curriculum;
- to develop the children's social skills through learning and working in group situations;
- to provide the opportunity for children to mix socially in a school environment;
- to offer teacher-directed learning experiences as an alternative to, and in support of, correspondence lessons;
- to assist children in their education through the application of correspondence lessons;
- to assist, encourage, direct and reassure parents in the education of their children; and
- to refer, plan and direct a program for children requiring specialist or remedial help.

6.4 Before considering the Mobile Classroom program, and the various experiences and activities that have been developed in relation to its aims and objectives, a brief outline of the Primary Correspondence School programs would be helpful as the Mobile Classroom is, in effect, a support service to the Primary Correspondence School.

Primary Correspondence School program

6.5 The responsibility of the Supervisor of the Primary Correspondence School and his staff for the education of children enrolled with the school includes the interpretation of the Syllabus and the preparation of appropriate teaching units to meet the needs of pupils (children and adults) who may be geographically isolated, homebound because of sickness or other reasons, or itinerant.

6.6 Primary Correspondence School programs are prepared in sequential papers in the three major areas of mathematics, language arts and social studies for Year 1 to Year 7. There are also available, for Years 3 to 7, optional papers in science and art. Supplementing the papers are teaching tapes that also enable individual teaching and two-way communication between teacher and pupil – an area that is continuing to be developed.

Translating Objectives into Practice

6.7 In translating the objectives of the Mobile Classroom into practice, in deciding priorities, and in developing programs to meet these priorities and the individual needs of the children and the communities in which the Mobile Classroom operates, the teacher has taken full cognisance of the fact that it is the Primary Correspondence School that has the prime and major responsibility for the education of isolated children; and that other schemes to assist isolated children are directed at complementing and supplementing its work by focusing on those areas of the curriculum that cannot be satisfactorily covered in written papers, by written comment, or by oral activity and response through cassette tapes. As the groups of children who attend the Mobile Classroom vary in numbers from five children to 14, and comprise children who are at a number of different stages of development and are developing at different rates, the programs are not static and stereotyped, but are emerging and developing as a result of the teacher's observation of the children, and through interacting with them, and as a result of discussions with parents, the Co-ordinator and other members of the P.C.A.P. Committee, and with principals and teachers in the local service centres of the various communities in which the Mobile Classroom operates.

The Mobile Classroom and its programs

6.8 On the days on which the functioning of the Mobile Classroom was observed, each day's activities commenced with an assembly at which the usual morning greetings were exchanged and announcements were made, after which the children went to class. A bright pleasant morning session followed during which all children, even the pre-school pupils who were attending that day, participated. This session included news, a prepared talk by one of the older pupils who had researched the substance of a report, singing (accompaniment had previously been taped), and drama or mime, with perhaps the use of percussion instruments. A new song, related to the teaching theme being used for the two weeks that the Mobile Classroom would be there, was then introduced.

6.9 The day's program continued in a well-organised, orderly fashion and included theme work which was introduced by a film from the video-cassette library, and mathematics. For mathematics, the children were divided into two groups, and the period consisted of work on Primary Correspondence papers, maths activities and games. The teacher-in-charge took each group for half the session, giving individual attention and supervising the working of the paper which was to be returned to the Primary Correspondence School. The unit support officer supervised the practical work, and the maths games. Her role is that of teacher aide.

6.10 The afternoon program included reading, art and craft, and physical education. On the day that the program was observed, physical education activities consisted of jumping practice in preparation for the annual sports competition in which the Clermont Convent, Kilcummen one-teacher school and the Primary Correspondence School pupils participate. Swimming is taught at four of the six sites in season.

Features of the teaching program

6.11 The rather mundane record of one day's program (see 6.8 to 6.10) does not convey any idea whatsoever of the warmth of the teacher and support officer, of the enthusiasm of the children, of the supportive climate of the classroom, or of the opportunities provided for pupils to be actively involved in a variety of learning experiences. Emphasis is placed on providing opportunities for communicating, expressing and investigating – a concentration on oral areas of instruction beyond the range of the work provided by the Primary Correspondence School, in an attempt to ensure maximum verbalisation by the children while the Mobile Classroom is functioning. This aspect is well illustrated, for example, in the language arts program used by the teacher-in-charge at Twin Hills.

LANGUAGE ARTS PROGRAM AT TWIN HILLS

Aims

1. To increase students' confidence in creative storytelling.
2. To introduce the concept of group discussions through experience.
3. To introduce film discussions.
4. To increase students' articulative powers (through fun speech exercises).
5. To increase students' visual and aural observation skills.
6. To introduce students to group drama activities and puppetry.
7. To assess students' reading, writing and spelling levels informally.
8. To increase students' comprehension of poetry, short stories, pictures, diagrams, single sentences and short paragraphs.
9. To give students the opportunity to speak in front of groups of people.
10. To build confidence within each student in reading, writing, talking and listening.
11. To reinforce word attack skills, phonic knowledge and several spelling rules.

Evaluation

I feel that the program was very successful. To improve upon it, my next program will include grammar concepts from the current Primary Correspondence School papers.

During the second week of school, I administered the *Doman Phonic Test* to many students of the upper school. I discovered several common recognition errors – *ow*, *oi*, *ie* and taught those. I also administered a diagnostic spelling test and drilled several spelling rules accordingly.

Mathematics

6.12 During its period on each site, the teacher-in-charge teaches any new mathematics in the next two papers that the children have already received from the Primary Correspondence School. She has the children complete these papers which are then returned to the Primary Correspondence School. Initially, the teacher-in-charge tried to teach mathematics to two groups, but found that she had to individualise the instruction to meet the needs of the pupils. In doing so, she found that the papers were completed in four days, and the extra day was used for consolidation, revision, enrichment and mathematics games.

Parent Perceptions of the Mobile Classroom

6.13 Parents and home supervisors, at meetings and also in private discussions, expressed freely and openly their views on the operation of the Mobile Classroom. This section considers what parents and home supervisors thought would or should be offered by the Mobile Classroom. In Chapter 7, paragraphs 7.4 to 7.6 record their perceptions of the outcomes of the School and its programs.

6.14 On the whole, parents are now quite happy with the role being played by the Mobile Classroom as a support service to the Primary Correspondence School. Several parents thought that, when the Mobile Classroom commenced, it would undertake to do all the papers from the Primary Correspondence School for the two weeks that it was on site, thus relieving the home supervisor of her teaching duties for this period. All parents agree that working of mathematics papers at the Mobile Classroom during this period is very helpful. Some would like to see an extension of this idea to include all new work in other papers as well. It would seem that, while this may be desirable, it is not possible in view of the priorities and the special role of the Mobile Classroom in complementing and supplementing the work of the Primary Correspondence School. Moreover, because of the very construction of the correspondence papers, which provide, in cyclical fashion, presentation of new learning, practice, revision, expansion and enrichment, it is not necessary. Assistance is given by the teacher-in-charge to home supervisors on the spot, if assistance is sought. In one area, it has been suggested that parents themselves have a meeting in the week prior to the arrival of the Mobile Classroom, to discuss the work currently being done on Primary Correspondence School papers, to isolate difficult elements in the papers, discover and make a list of common difficulties, and then present these to the teacher-in-charge for her advice and assistance, or for special attention, while children are attending the Mobile Classroom.

6.15 Some parents also see a need to reconsider the monthly activity day, which was introduced by parents to provide opportunities for those very experiences that are now being emphasised in the Mobile Classroom.

6.16 Perhaps one further area of assistance that could be provided by the Mobile Classroom in connection with the Primary Correspondence School papers would be in the teaching of reading to Year 1, a difficult area for the inexperienced home supervisor.

Key Features of Mobile Classroom Programs

6.17 Summing up, the programs of the Mobile Classroom, and their implementation, are noteworthy for their variety and flexibility. Variety characterises the Classroom resources – the equipment itself, the library and other resources; variety is a feature of the stimuli used, and of the situations created daily for the children, to provide them with opportunities to communicate, express and investigate.

6.18 Flexibility is the key feature in the teaching strategies adopted by the teacher-in-charge. This flexibility is reflected in her different allocation of time for individual children and for groups, in arranging groups, in providing for interaction in school and in the playground, and in her roles as teacher, friend, resource person, stimulator, advisor and consultant.

Administration

6.19 On the days that the Mobile Classroom was observed, the teacher-in-charge gave the writer open access to school records, as well as being freely available herself during these days for discussion about all aspects of the functioning of the school. Her assistance and co-operation were greatly appreciated.

The usual records associated with a school – correspondence files, the roll, the petty cash account, copies of programs, and reports to parents, the Primary Correspondence School and School of the Air – are well kept.

Staffing

6.20 During the time that the Mobile Classroom functioned, up to December 1978, staff consisted of two teachers and a unit support officer, but was reduced to one teacher and a support officer for 1979. This reduction is justified in terms of the numbers of children attending the School in the different centres. Staffing should be more flexible in 1980 as the present teacher-in-charge wishes to return to the regular classroom. This request is strongly supported on professional grounds, and because of the heavy physical demands that the job entails (see 6.22). A number of alternatives for staffing are suggested for consideration by the Committee:

- Staffing for 1980 could be the same as for this year, one teacher, and a unit support officer or a teacher aide.
- There could be one teacher and one unit support officer, with a supply teacher at centres where the numbers of children, and/or the numbers of home supervisors and governesses attending, would warrant such additional assistance. To date, Alpha and Twin Hills would be such centres. At Alpha this year, for example, two home supervisors and two governesses attended. But the presence and services of the home supervisors were not fully used as the teacher found she could not satisfactorily organise programs to fit the individual needs of the home supervisors and the Mobile Classroom programs as well. The supply teacher, in addition to assisting in the Mobile Classroom as required by the teacher-in-charge, could help organise and provide a special in-service program for the home supervisors attending. This suggestion is developed later (see 6.37).

- Two teachers, preferably a married couple, and a unit support officer could be employed. One of the teachers would serve as a supply teacher when required, and as an itinerant teacher when not required on the staff of the Mobile Classroom. This would provide staff at the same level as for 1978.
- Another alternative is to employ two teachers, preferably a married couple, one as teacher-in-charge and the other as a teacher. The latter could have a number of different roles, teacher aide, supply teacher and itinerant teacher. The teacher aide role would include the performance of those duties now done by the unit support officer. The role of supply teacher could be used at Alpha and Twin Hills, or where enrolment warranted it. Duties would include teaching and organising appropriate learning experiences for home supervisors. As an itinerant teacher, she could assist parents and children on properties too distant for them to attend the Mobile Classroom and visit properties within reasonable access of the School to encourage parents to send children to the Mobile Classroom.

6.21 The last alternative would give a new dimension to the Mobile School. An itinerant teacher would provide a special support service to the Primary Correspondence School and to the Mobile Classroom in the larger centres where children would benefit from exposure to the ideas and professional skills of two teachers.

Period of Service as Mobile Classroom Teacher

6.22 At the end of 1979, the teacher-in-charge will have served two years with the Mobile Classroom Unit. During this period, she will have been 'on the road' since July 1978, working a five-week cycle – four weeks on site and one week at base. Travelling to sites, setting up, dismantling the Unit at the end of the fortnight and repeating this procedure the following fortnight are physically demanding even for strong healthy young women. In some centres, the teacher visits a different home each evening. The visit invariably includes a discussion with the parents concerning their children, and advice and assistance regarding lesson papers or other services available to parents of isolated children.

6.23 The following extract from the report furnished by the teacher-in-charge in 1978 illustrates one teacher's perceptions of the very heavy demands made:

> *Having four weeks out places a severe physical, mental and economic strain. We find that we don't get into town in time to get to a bank, or to meet any professional people. At all sites, we have children and parents with us constantly and therefore we are on call most of the time. Parents demand attention, whether to ask advice or justify their teaching, whenever they can obtain your attention. Physically, you are on the go all the time. Once school ends, there always seems to be maintenance work and preparation.*
>
> *At the end of four weeks, we find we are extremely tired. These facts I feel should be presented to any person going to serve in any capacity in this job. A person needs to be physically strong and healthy and appreciate the fact that the job doesn't end at three o'clock and start at nine o'clock. Also, you have to be prepared to tackle any job which presents itself.*

6.24 Mt Douglas in the Belyando Shire is the most northerly site and children board at the Mt Douglas homestead where the owner and his wife, assisted by some parents who also board for the period, provide board and lodging. Reporting at the end of 1978, the teacher-in-charge of the Mobile Classroom stated that she and the unit support officer on some occasions had helped the station owner's wife in the preparation of the evening meal for the children who were staying at the property during the visit of the Mobile Classroom, and then joined the owner, his family and the pupils for the evening meal. The teacher's report added that there was no TV reception at all, so in the evenings, a ROCTAPUS tape or film was shown, and, at times, a bedtime story was read before the children went to sleep.

6.25 In view of the expressed wishes of the present teacher-in-charge for return to the regular classroom in 1980, and of the exacting nature of this position, it is recommended that a period of two years' service with the Mobile Classroom be regarded as the maximum term of such service.

Advisory and Consultative Role of Mobile Classroom

6.26 In the advisory and consultative role of the Mobile Classroom, there should be a high degree of interaction and communication between the staff, and parents and home supervisors; between the Mobile Classroom and the Primary Correspondence School; and between the Mobile Classroom and School of the Air.

Parents, home supervisors and the Mobile Classroom

6.27 There is good rapport and interaction between the teacher-in-charge of the Mobile Classroom and the parents and home supervisors. The advisory and consultative roles were mentioned in paragraphs 6.14 and, incidentally in 6.22. Whenever there is contact between the teacher-in-charge and parents or home supervisors, inevitably advice and assistance are given informally.

6.28 There is formal reporting by the teacher-in-charge to parents of individual children by interview at the conclusion of the visit to each site. Parents not only are concerned about their children's achievements and progress but also seek reassurance and encouragement in their own unaccustomed role as supervisors of correspondence lessons, and reassurance that the standard of their children's work compares favourably with that of children attending a regular school.

Mobile Classroom, Primary Correspondence School and School of the Air

6.29 The Mobile Classroom and School of the Air are both support services for the Primary Correspondence School, complementing the role of Primary Correspondence School, and supplementing its programs. Some children attending the Mobile Classroom are also on School of the Air. There is need for close liaison among the three services for the interchange of information on pupil progress.

6.30 It would seem that this exchange of information has not yet reached a satisfactory level in the interests of the children concerned. At the end of each Mobile Classroom visit, the teacher-in-charge completes a report for the Supervisor of the Primary Correspondence School on each child, making use of the *pro forma* report from headings designed for use by School of the Air teachers and the itinerant teachers serving in the South-Western Priority Country Area. These are then forwarded to the Supervisor, Primary Correspondence School, and distributed to the teachers concerned. But there, regrettably, the matter seems to end.

6.31 There is no formal acknowledgment of the reports nor any feedback, as far as the writer could discover, to the teacher-in-charge of the Mobile Classroom from teachers at the Primary Correspondence School. There is no doubt that the Mobile Classroom could provide special work for an individual child in an area that the Primary Correspondence School correction has revealed as needing special work or extra attention if the teacher-in-charge were informed. She would also be an on-the-spot helper for the home supervisor of the particular child.

6.32 School of the Air teachers also report regularly to the Primary Correspondence School on children enrolled, a number of whom also attend the Mobile Classroom. This information, some of which may be useful and helpful to the teacher-in-charge of the Mobile Classroom, is not passed on to her by the Primary Correspondence School.

6.33 Communication between the Primary Correspondence School and the Mobile Classroom is very tenuous indeed. It would be helpful if some person on the staff of the Primary Correspondence School were appointed as liaison officer for the Mobile Classroom, to ensure effective two-way communication in the interests of all concerned. Such a liaison officer could provide the teacher-in-charge of the Mobile Classroom with pertinent information on children attending the Mobile Classroom at each of the sites just prior to visits; Primary Correspondence School teachers' comments on reports sent in by the teacher-in-charge of children who attended at the previous visit to that site; and requests for follow-up (e.g. a particular subject weakness or late return of tapes).

The Mobile Classroom and Public Relations

6.34 The handing over of the completed Mobile Classroom Unit to the Minister, and the official commencement of functioning of the Unit, were widely publicised in the press. The Unit itself went on display at the 1978 State Conference of the Isolated Children's Parents' Association in Emerald, and also in Rockhampton during the 1978 Show Week. The Co-ordinator was interviewed for a press report, and the Chairman of the P.C.A.P. sub-committee, which drew up the submission, and the first teacher-in-charge were interviewed and received radio coverage. Through the Central P.C.A.P. newsletter and also through School of the Air, the movements and operations of the Mobile Classroom were publicised. In short, very good media publicity was provided for the commencement of this unique educational provision for isolated children.

6.35 The interest generated by that publicity ensured a very good beginning for the Mobile Classroom. The reliability and quality of the service being provided, the warmth and friendliness of the personnel operating the service and the high degree of professionalism and dedication exhibited by the teacher-in-charge have resulted in the Mobile Classroom and its staff being held in very high public regard.

6.36 Perhaps one of the most interesting and valuable outcomes of its operation has been that it has acted as an integrating force in each community that it serves. Parents and home supervisors have commented on this particular phenomenon. In every centre visited there is a 'concert' on the last night of the School's visit where children present the theme of their two weeks' activities in drama, singing, dancing and oral expression. At the conclusion, folk and square dancing are held with all parents and children participating. At one centre, home supervisors have a formal luncheon together during the visit of the Mobile Classroom; at others, a barbecue is held. The Mobile Classroom has motivated one mother to organise activity days for pre-schoolers who are too young to be enrolled with the Pre-School Correspondence School in her area. Service clubs in nearby centres are providing funds for materials and equipment, a closed school is used as a meeting place. One further outcome of the Mobile Classroom service has been an increased awareness by parents of each child's need for social interaction and the other special programs that are a feature of the work on the Mobile Classroom. As one parent remarked, 'We are learning and growing too'.

Further Assistance for Home Supervisors

6.37 When the Mobile Classroom is on site, on-the-spot assistance is available to home supervisors and parents and they have an open invitation to observe the teacher-in-charge teaching the children, but more could still be done in a positive way for home supervisors in certain centres if there were some flexibility in the staffing of the Mobile Classroom. For example, the use of a Primary Correspondence teacher or the employment of a supply teacher at Alpha, where there are a state primary school and a convent primary school, would enable a home supervisor's seminar to be conducted with the support and co-operation of the Mobile Classroom and the other two schools. On the occasion that the Mobile Classroom was observed at Alpha, there were two home supervisors and two governesses present, but the teacher-in-charge was unable to organise a suitable program for them, nor capitalise on their attendance because of her other commitments.

6.38 It is therefore recommended that consideration be given to developing a program for home supervisors at Alpha when the Mobile Classroom is on site and when the attendance of home supervisors warrants such provision. A task-orientated, social interaction approach would seem appropriate and indicated. Ideally, there would be opportunities for contact and discussion with other teachers, observation of teaching techniques, study and preparation of curriculum materials, and particular provision to meet the individual perceived needs of the home supervisor.

Issues, Concerns, Recommendations

6.39 One additional area of assistance from the Mobile Classroom that could be considered for parents and home supervisors would be the teaching of reading for Year 1 pupils. In 1979, there were nine Year 1 pupils out of a total of 58 pupils attending the Mobile Classroom. All centres except Pioneer have Year 1 pupils (Pioneer may have five or six in 1980). With a more flexible staffing of the Mobile Classroom in 1980, such assistance would be practicable.

6.40 A number of staffing alternatives are suggested for consideration. Enrolments at the different centres, and the availability of suitable staff, will be the main criteria for the determination of staffing for 1980. The fourth alternative suggested in paragraph 6.20 would seem the most suitable.

6.41 A period of two years would appear the most suitable length of service for the Mobile Classroom teacher in terms of continuity of teaching for the pupils, and in view of the very special demands made on the teacher.

6.42 Where a number of home supervisors and governesses are present during the visit of the Mobile Classroom, a special program should be organised for them (e.g. the need at Alpha this year). There is a very real need for the Year 1 home supervisors at Pioneer to have a seminar as early as possible in 1980, particularly as it is the home supervisors' first encounter with teaching correspondence lessons.

Regular seminars for home supervisors should be held throughout the Priority Country Area. These could be task-orientated, of the social interaction type and based on the real and perceived needs of the participants.

CHAPTER 7

THE MOBILE CLASSROOM – EVALUATION

Introduction

7.1 The evaluation procedure was conducted in two phases. The first was concerned with a study of the original submissions of the proposal to the Joint Committee in which were set out the aims and objectives of the School (see 6.3), and with gaining impressions from viewing the Project in operation over a number of days at two sites, Mt Stuart and Alpha. The second phase involved interviews, meetings, discussions, and a study of all documentation relating to the Project. In these ways, a great amount of data was gathered from a wide range of people – parents, professionals, home supervisors, the team implementing the program, and members of the P.C.A.P. Committee – about the program, to ascertain their attitudes, reactions, and expectations, and the likely outcomes; their perceptions of the effectiveness of the program; their feelings, satisfactions and dissatisfactions with it; and ways in which the program might be improved.

Programs and Outcomes

7.2 In Chapter 6, the variety and flexibility of the Mobile Classroom and its programs were considered. The ways in which the aims and objectives of the Mobile Classroom were translated into practice, with strong orientation to social interaction and the provision of appropriate educational experiences and activities to encourage pupil communication, expression and investigation, were outlined.

7.3 The teacher-in-charge perceives reactions to the programs and the service itself as highly positive. This view is supported by comments made by parents and home supervisors.

Parents perceptions of outcomes

7.4 Some comments from parents and home supervisors were:

- *The Mobile Classroom, through socialisation and verbalisation, has contributed to the ideas and creative skills of my son.*
- *The children are – interested, motivated, more confident, more aware, more assured, enthusiastic, anxious to go to school, and are developing skills at sport.*
- *The children mix better when we go out.*
- *They know one another when they meet in town and stop to talk.*
- *They get new ideas at the school, and from the other children.*
- *My son, because there are no school-age girls on our property, for the first time is mixing with girls.*
- *My child's verbal skills have improved.*

- *My child has learnt to play with other children.*
- *The Mobile Classroom supports and encourages the child. It provides for the individual; consolidates the Primary Correspondence School maths; and develops a spirit of competition.*
- *I find that the Mobile Classroom makes the children very tired because of travel, lessons and sport.*

One mother reported that the Mobile Classroom made her son 'unhappy with school' (the Primary Correspondence School) because he disliked Primary Correspondence School papers and preferred the Mobile Classroom-style of learning. Another mother reported with delight how her young son wanted 'all the Mobile School children' invited to his birthday party. This was the first time that he had been able to identify with a group.

7.5 Parents and home supervisors perceived one of the most valuable outcomes of the Mobile Classroom as the special contribution it was making to their own growth and development:

- *The Mobile Classroom widens the perspectives of parents.*
- *Parents learn a lot from the teacher-in-charge.*
- *We get an idea of standards.*
- *I learned a lot from watching the teacher take a maths lesson.*

In short, parents and home supervisors are supported, encouraged and advised by the Mobile Classroom teacher.

7.6 These excerpts from letters which two parents wrote to the secretary of the P.C.A.P. Joint Committee, are typical of parent reactions.

- *We wish to express our delight with the first visit of the Mobile School and the achievements of the staff in two short weeks. The response of the children was amazing, particularly in their oral expression and group activities, which correspondence children miss out on. Our daughter, a Year 3 student, attended the Mobile Classroom and said that it was lots of fun and she enjoyed it. Although after two weeks she felt tired and ready for a break, she is eagerly looking forward to its return.*
- *Congratulations on the Mobile Classroom. The first weeks of school went off, I feel, really well. At the end of the week there were some very tired, but happy, children.*

Teachers perceptions

7.7 The teacher-in-charge of the Mobile Classroom has noted and reported on changes and development in the children, all of whom have attended the Mobile Classroom at least twice. Her report states that:

- *One of the most noticeable indicators of the children's growth and development is the improvement in communication and oral language skills.*
- *Children became less egocentric and are learning to distinguish between 'self' and 'others'.*

- *Changes in children's behaviour as a result of opportunities for interaction are evident. On the first visit of the Mobile Classroom at one site, none of the children had previously met one another. Children spent the first week wanting to play, and made up for it by working hard in the second week. Observation of the same group of children on the occasion of the School's second visit indicated that the children were playing, working and interacting as children do in a well conducted, one-teacher school.*
- *There is marked development of skills as a result of planned physical education. Children had to be taught to throw a ball, how to catch and how to jump, as their only natural skill was running. Team games followed and children discovered they had to keep rules, to take turns, 'to play the game' and not to quarrel.*
- *The children are becoming more aware of themselves as part of a wider community and beginning to see beyond themselves and their immediate environment.*

Aims and outcomes

7.8 The Mobile Classroom is meeting very well the aims and objectives in the seven areas determined by the Central Queensland P.C.A.P. Committee (see 6.3). The Co-ordinator and the teacher-in-charge see the function of the school as an evolving process. There is continuous need to evaluate its programs, to examine the role of the School and the relationships between it and the social and other agents of education which are constantly interacting with each other.

7.9 There is no empirical evidence available, however, which would indicate that a child's performance, after attending the Mobile Classroom for a period, is better or worse than it was prior to such attendance. The teachers at the Primary Correspondence School stated that there was no such evidence in the papers returned to the school for correction. Some teachers mentioned that the worked papers in mathematics done at the Mobile Classroom and then returned showed a decline in the quality of setting out and sometimes in achievement. They did say, however, that the standard in the papers returned from the Mobile Classroom was perhaps closer to the norm for the child, because home supervisors invariably ensure that work returned to the Primary Correspondence School is error free, and that writing and display are in 'copy book' style.

Conclusions

7.10 There is no doubt that the Mobile Classroom service has been very well received and supported; that it has been an outstanding success in the area of public relations; that it is making a very special contribution to the education of those isolated children who have access to the service; and that it is well accepted by parents and home supervisors. Parents and home supervisors now appreciate its role as a support service to the Primary Correspondence School and are aware of the reasons for the particular program emphases that have been adopted to meet individual needs of the pupils attending. It is compensation, within the classroom for the experiences the child does not have outside the school, and for the experiences unable to be provided by the Primary Correspondence School and by the child's immediate environment.

7.11 In planning programs and in the functioning of the Mobile Classroom, the most significant and central factor is close teacher-pupil relationships. It must be accepted that, in this unique educational provision, educational opportunities available to the children, and, in a very special way, to the parents and home supervisors, will depend primarily on the personal suitability, knowledge of, and empathy for, life in isolated areas, as well as on the quality and professional competence of the teachers appointed to the Mobile Classroom. The kind of community represented by this school seems to be more important, perhaps, than lesson content.

Issues, Concerns, Recommendations

7.12 The Mobile Classroom caters for about one-third of the children in that area enrolled with the Primary Correspondence School. Fifty-eight out of a total of 176 attend the School. Some concern has been expressed that such a small proportion of children are receiving the support available from the service. It should be pointed out that not all of the 176 children have access to the school – five shires, for example, have no Mobile Classroom site. However, from inquiries made during the course of the investigation into the functioning of the Mobile Classroom, it appeared that sites have been carefully selected and were appropriately located. Nevertheless, the distribution of the children in the various shires could not be plotted on to shire maps at the time that this study was being carried out because *postal* and not *residential* addresses are recorded by the Primary Correspondence School. Action, however, has been taken by the Supervisor to obtain residential addresses so that a review can be made of site locations for the Mobile Classroom. The Co-ordinator has the matter in hand.

7.13 The Alpha site is perhaps the most interesting because it is located in a township where there are two primary schools (state and non-state). At the Alpha site, the Mobile Classroom provides a service for 70 per cent of the Primary Correspondence School pupils domiciled in the Jericho Shire. No other site caters for such a high percentage of eligible children. It was selected because of its central position, and the children attending the school are distributed within a radius of 100 km of Alpha.

7.14 The Alpha experience raises some important issues. Is it feasible to provide a two-week program three times a year in selected schools throughout the whole of the State for isolated children enrolled with the Primary Correspondence School? The program offered to these children could well be modelled on that provided by the Mobile Classroom, which emphasises those aspects of the curriculum not capable of being fully and satisfactorily covered by correspondence. Teachers from the Primary Correspondence School would be ideal for the purpose. If they were not available, supply teachers could be employed and a variety of organisational structures could be used in the selected schools to ensure maximum benefit for children attending. The cost factor would not be prohibitive.

Could the children now attending the Mobile Classroom in Alpha be placed in one of the local schools, and still retain their identify, once a term for a fortnight? A PCS teacher or a supply teacher could be employed. The Mobile Classroom would then be available for service elsewhere if a need were discovered as a result of the review of site locations currently being carried out.

Are the services and experiences provided by the Mobile Classroom more valuable to the isolated child and the home supervisor than the services provided by the Primary Itinerant Teacher Service? Primary itinerant teachers in south-west Queensland have recognised the need for group experiences for children. Mini-Schools have become a feature of their work. It is considered that a comparative analysis of both services should be undertaken and a report presented to the Joint Committee for consideration as the findings could have important policy implications.

7.15 It is understood that a submission was made to the Joint Committee in 1978, suggesting the introduction of a pilot program to be known as the Isolated Children's Accommodation Scheme, whereby 25 isolated children would be privately accommodated for a period of eight weeks and attend school with the host family's children. Conditions and allowances were to be similar to those pertaining to the private accommodation scheme in operation for physically handicapped children.

It is considered that this proposal has merit particularly in those cases where a child does not have access to any other special program supporting and/or augmenting the work of the Primary Correspondence School, such as School of the Air, the Mobile Classroom of the Primary Itinerant Teacher Service.

7.16 If isolated children are to gain maximum benefit from the various support programs that have become available, then there is need for a very close liaison between all concerned, and a high degree of mutual support, co-operation and communication at all levels. This is not being achieved at the present and, in the interests of the children concerned, positive action needs to be taken to remedy the deficiencies in liaison with the Primary Correspondence School.

CHAPTER 8

SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR THE EDUCATION OF ISOLATED CHILDREN

Introduction

8.1 Queensland's first initiative in providing some form of education service for isolated children was a system of travelling teachers, established in 1901. Holthouse[1] reports that 'the work of the itinerant teachers reached its peak in 1923 when itinerant teachers covered sixteen districts of a total area of 489 000 square miles, and visited 1445 families from 1 to 5 times'.

The Primary Correspondence School

8.2 In the previous year (1922), the Primary Correspondence School had been established, and it eventually replaced the itinerant teacher service, with the number of itinerant teachers gradually declining over the next decade until, at the beginning of 1933, the service ceased when the sole remaining itinerant teacher returned to a regular classroom.

Schools of the Air

8.3 The Primary Correspondence School remained the only provision for the education of isolated children in Queensland until 1960, when the first School of the Air was established at Cloncurry. It was moved to Mt Isa with the Royal Flying Doctor Service base in 1964. Two other Schools of the Air were established, one at Charters Towers in 1963, which moved to Chairs with the Royal Flying Doctor Service base in 1972; and one at Charleville in 1966.

8.4 In the last decade, there has been an increasing interest in the education of isolated children. Contributing to this awareness has been:

- increasing education expectations of the Australian community, expectations that are shared by people living in isolated communities, who recognise the economic necessity for higher levels of education because the isolated child must frequently choose a non-rural oriented career;
- the establishment in 1971 of the Isolated Children's Parents' Association, an articulate and vocal group that has brought the needs of isolated children forcefully to all levels of government and to the general public;
- the Senate resolution in 1972 to investigate the education of isolated children in Australia;

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1 H. Holthouse, *Looking Back – The First 150 Years of Queensland Schools*, Department of Education, Queensland, 1975, p. 118.

- the Karmel (Interim Schools Commission) Report in 1973;
- Commonwealth financial assistance in 1973 for the education of isolated children;
- the 1976 Senate Report, *Education of Isolated Children in Australia*; and
- Schools Commission funds in 1977 for funding of educational programs for disadvantaged country areas, known in Queensland as Priority Country Area Programs (P.C.A.P.).

Other Special Provisions for Isolated Children

8.5 As a result of the various factors operating in the last decade, there are at present in Queensland a number of other services and provisions especially for children who are geographically isolated, and/or living in the two areas defined and approved by the Minister as being Priority Country Areas. Many of these programs complement and supplement the work of the Primary Correspondence School, others assist the Secondary Correspondence School, and some programs are of a cultural and curricular enrichment kind.

8.6 Programs and initiatives supporting the Primary Correspondence School include:

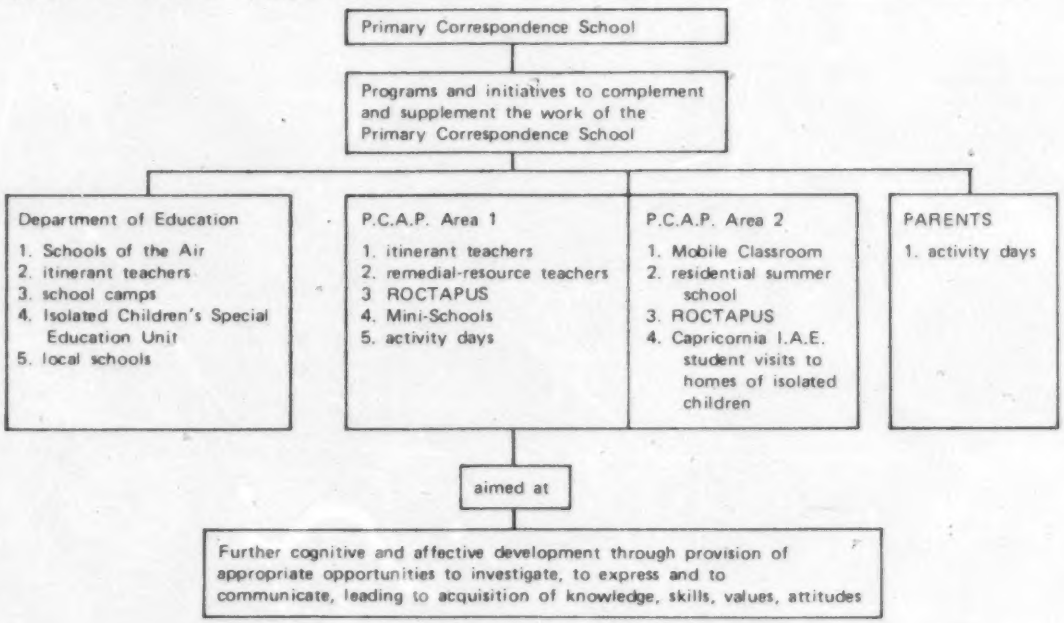
- Department of Education
  - Schools of the Air at Cairns, Charleville and Mt Isa
  - Primary Itinerant Teacher Service, Northern Region
  - Isolated Children's Special Education Unit (P.C.A.P. has provided considerable assistance for the Unit)
  - school camps
  - local schools (principals and teachers assist home supervisors and governesses).
- P.C.A.P. Joint Committee
- south-west Queensland
  - Primary Itinerant Teacher Service
  - Remedial-Resource Itinerant Service
  - ROCTAPUS
  - Mini-Schools
  - activity days
- central Queensland
  - Mobile Classroom
  - Residential summer school
  - ROCTAPUS
  - Students Visit Isolated Children Scheme
- Parents
  - activity days

Figure 5 presents the information diagramatically.

8.7 Reference to Figure 5 reveals that there is a plethora of schemes currently in operation providing a variety of programs for isolated children. Not all schemes apply to the whole of the State, and people outside the two declared priority areas who have similar educational problems are concerned and vocal about their inability to participate in programs designed to improve and equalise educational opportunity for country children. The two Priority Country Areas find themselves so well served now, that some parents have necessarily to make decisions regarding their priorities. If, for example, a parent in the Central Queensland Priority Area has a child attending the Mobile Classroom, completes all the papers supplied for her child by the Primary Correspondence School, and has her child attend the residential summer school and activity days, the year of 52 weeks is far too short, as the following analysis reveals:

• Primary Correspondence School papers (36)	–	36 weeks
• revision of Primary Correspondence School papers	–	6 weeks
• Mobile Classroom	–	6 weeks
• residential summer school	–	2 weeks
• activity days	–	2 weeks
• annual school holidays	–	10 weeks
Total	–	62 weeks

Figure 5: The Primary Correspondence School and other Provisions for Education of Isolated Children in Queensland


Primary Correspondence School
Programs and initiatives to complement and supplement the work of the Primary Correspondence School
Department of Education
1. Schools of the Air
2. itinerant teachers
3. school camps
4. Isolated Children's Special Education Unit
5. local schools
P.C.A.P. Area 1
1. itinerant teachers
2. remedial-resource teachers
3 ROCTAPUS
4. Mini-Schools
5. activity days
P.C.A.P. Area 2
1. Mobile Classroom
2. residential summer school
3. ROCTAPUS
4. Capricornia I.A.E. student visits to homes of isolated children
PARENTS
1. activity days
aimed at
Further cognitive and affective development through provision of appropriate opportunities to investigate, to express and to communicate, leading to acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, attitudes

Need for Co-operation and Rationalisation

8.8 Indeed, the number of programs assisting the isolated child is confusing, and there is uncertainty, not only in the minds of parents and citizens, but also in the minds of some teachers, about the programs and sources of funding. There is even uncertainty in the minds of some teachers implementing the programs about routine administrative matters. It seems that there is an obvious need for all concerned with programs assisting isolated children in this State to meet and discuss current provisions, and the interrelationship of the various segments of provision. Rationalising and co-ordinating the provision for these children at present appears not to be a unified effort, but rather a number of separate, unrelated programs. There seems to be a need also for a simple clear statement, for the information of parents, teachers and others, of the programs available, of the role of each program, whether it is complementary and/or supplementary to the work of the Primary or Secondary Correspondence Schools, and whether its thrust is remedial, compensatory, cultural or for enrichment. It is therefore recommended that the Joint Committee give consideration to approaching the Department of Education with a view to setting up a planning committee for the purpose of organising and conducting a conference of all concerned with distance education/learning. State Development Committee or P.C.A.P. funds could be debited with the costs (or share the costs) of any such conference.

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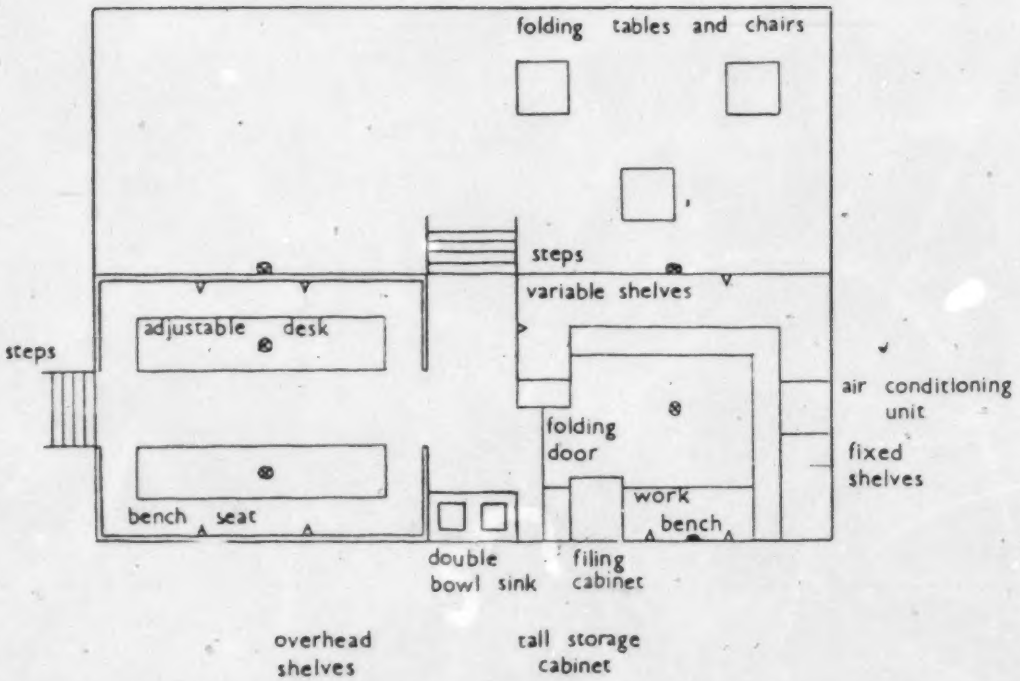
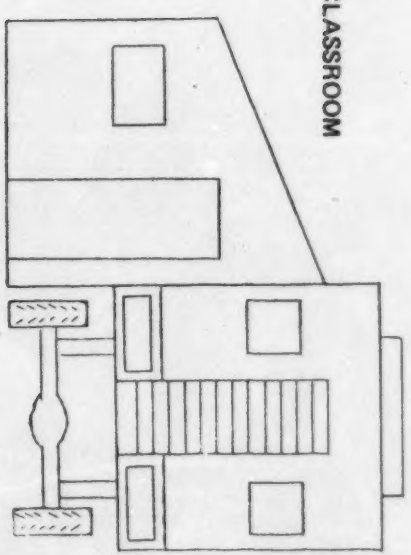
Floor Plan

J Williams

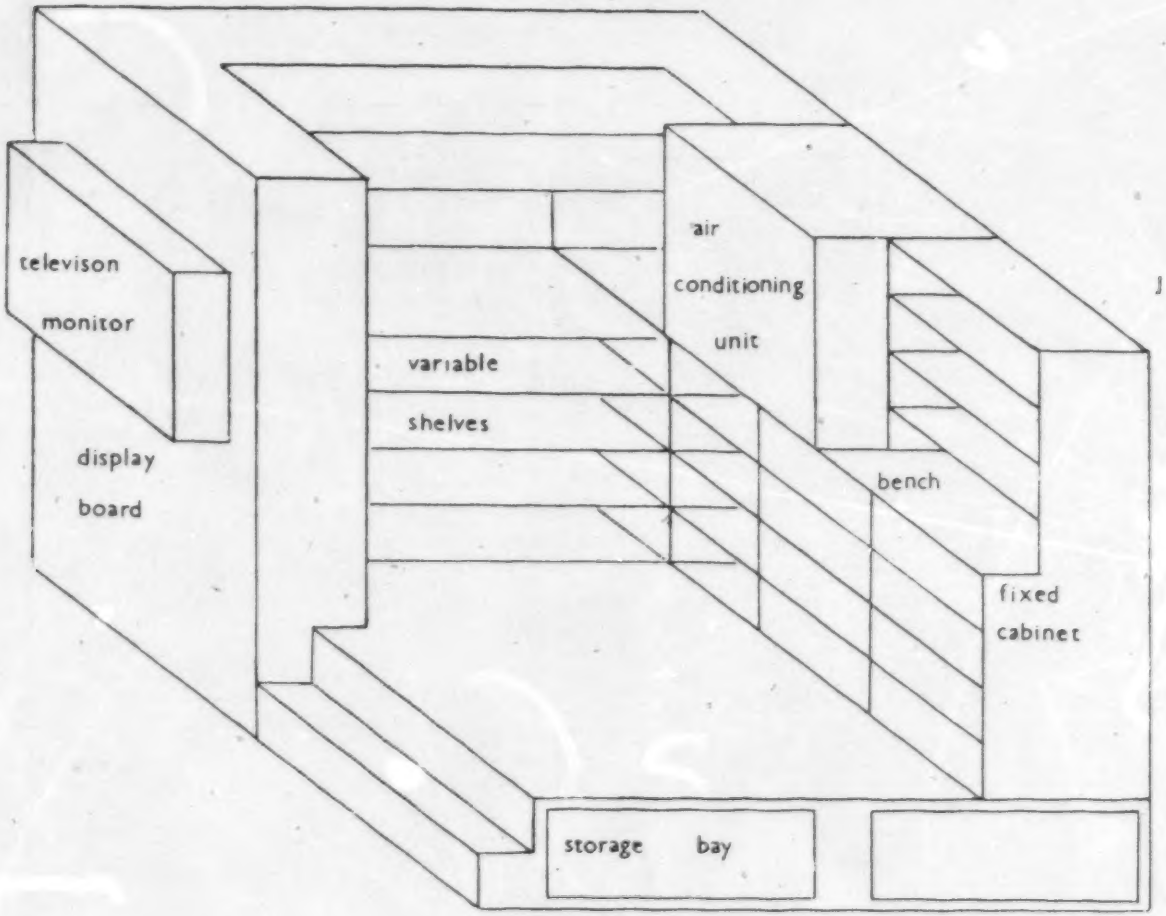


APPENDIX 1

THE MOBILE CLASSROOM – PLAN



Storage Area



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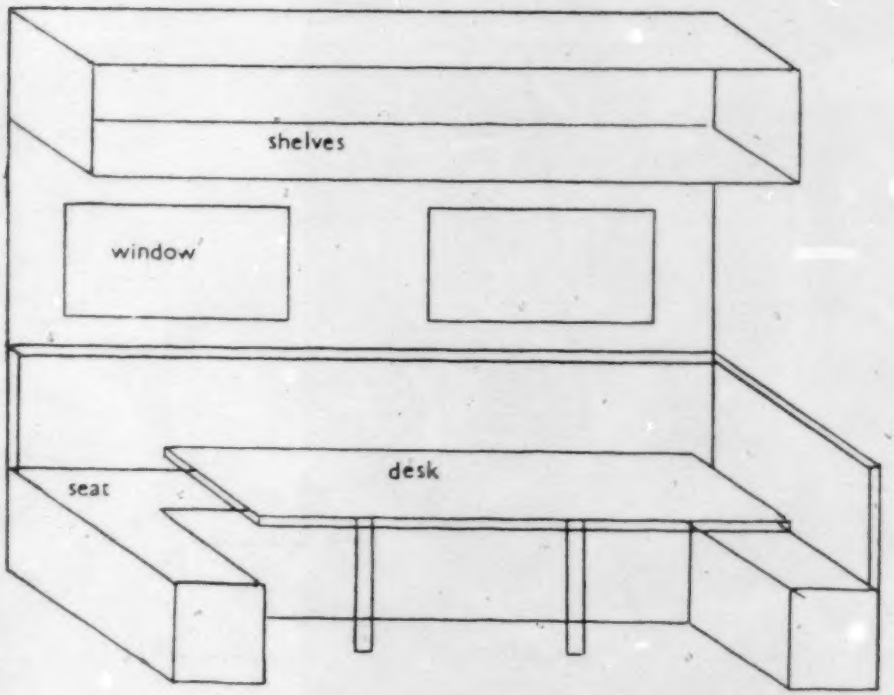
Teaching Area



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Complete Set Up